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I Like a Gershwin Tune

ARISTIDES

You may not have caught my act at the old Pratt-Lane Hotel. Brilliant stuff. A knockout, take my word for it. I came on and sang one number, and one number only: "Any Bonds Today?" Maybe you'll recall the song's most powerful line, which—modesty won't do here—I belted out gloriously: "Bonds of freedom, that's what I'm selling, any bonds today?" The crowd—my parents and their friends—went wild. The year was 1942, the war was on, and I was five. I retired as a singer later that same year, when I was told in nursery school not to sing so loudly, especially since I sang off-key. Knowing when to quit—that, I'd say, is the name of the game.

I admire people who know when to quit, especially singers, many of whom go on much too long. "I always wanted to sing as well as Frank Sinatra," someone I know reported recently of the great crooner, "and now I can." Julie London, the torch singer, must have recognized that, beyond a certain age, carrying that torch can only singe a woman's no-longer-lush eyelashes. Another singer whose retirement I regret is Tom Lehrer, whose musical parodies, though much dated, still amuse. A friend tells me that he asked Lehrer why he stopped writing and performing his comic songs. "Since Henry Kissinger won the Nobel Peace Prize," Lehrer replied, "nothing seems funny anymore."

In the America of the 1940s and 1950s, when I was growing up, popular music was everywhere; and it was not of interest only to the young, as popular music is today. Singers were great heroes, bandleaders famous personages. At a neighborhood delicatessen in Rogers Park called Ashkenaz, there was a sandwich called The Lou Breese, named after the bandleader at the Chicago Theater. I don't recall the contents of that sandwich, but I feel confident it must, by today's standards, have been powerfully life-threatening: chopped liver and pastrami, perhaps. I do know, though, that I would rather have a sandwich named after me than receive an honorary degree from any university in the Western world.

Radio shows not only featured singers, but many had a singer as part of the regular cast—Jack Benny had Dennis Day and Bob Hope had Frances Langford. A bandleader named Kay Kyser had a radio show that he called, in a kind of subtitle, "The Kollege of Musical Knowledge." Ozzie Nelson, of *The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet,* was another bandleader. Jokes about the drunkenness of musicians, a specialty of Phil Harris, who was also on *The Jack Benny Program,* were also endemic. In the early years of television, singers of popular songs were still thought necessary: Arthur Godfrey had Julius LaRosa, Steve Allen had Steve Lawrence and Eydie Gorme. Any singer who had a big hit song was certain to be booked on *The Ed Sullivan Show.* Bing Crosby and Frank Sinatra were more widely known than any American athlete or politician except the president. Popular music was part of the national (as opposed to teen) culture in a way that it has not come close to being ever again.

Mine was far from a musical family. No one played an instrument, and the phonograph, as it was then called when it wasn't called the Victrola (after the firm RCA Victor), was not at the center of our family life. The only records I remember being played in our apartment were an album of 78s of Stephen Foster songs sung by Bing Crosby that my father liked to nap to and an album of fast-talking Danny Kaye songs, "Minnie the Moocher" prominent among them. My father would occasionally hum a tune while shaving—"Anybody Here Seen Kelly?" was in his extremely

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limited repertoire—but my mother never sang in my hearing. I probably got my off-key singing voice from her.

But even in this relatively unmusical home I could not avoid the sheer musicality of life. Singing was part of grade-school life; every year in grammar school, one's class would prepare programs to sing at semi-annual assemblies. Music lessons as well as tap dancing lessons were offered through the public school system at very low rates. In high school, one had to take a course in music, which, along with art, was known as a minor subject. Our music teacher was a lovely woman: a spinster more than six feet tall who dressed in tailored suits, Miss Adele Burke played great rolling arpeggios on the piano while singing Jerome Kern and Rodgers and Hart songs in a florid style. Every other movie seemed to have singing in it; José Iturbi or Oscar Levant was regularly seated at a piano near a swimming pool or in a marvelously suave Manhattan apartment; and it was not uncommon for the male lead in these movies to croon into the ear of his inamorata, which, in reality, couldn't have been all that pleasant from the standpoint of the inamorata.

So pervasive was song in middle-class American life, and so tied up with the notion of romance, that a regular activity of Middle Western college fraternities was serenading sororities. When a member of a fraternity gave his pin to a member of a sorority, not only was a serenade called for, but during the serenade the boy was expected to step forth and sing, solo, directly to the girl. I spent a semester in such a fraternity, and I still remember the serenade of a boy named Ronald Kaplan to Janey Weinstein, an heiress to a funeral-parlor fortune. Ronnie Kaplan, large and rather lumpy, was a boy with the gift of perpetual middle age—how easy growing older must have been for him! At the appropriate moment during the serenade, he stepped forth to allow, in a quavering voice, that yes, Janey, though both the Rockies and Gibraltar might crumble and all the rest of it, his love, hey! no question about it, his love was here to stay. It turned out he was right, for they later married and, as far as I know, lived happily ever after.

I don't mean to imply that I grew up in a limitlessly rich era of songwriting. Throughout my boyhood a regular flow of entirely junky novelty songs kept popping up, among them "Mairzy Doats," "I Like Chewing Gum," "Chickery-Chick, Cha-la, Cha-la," "Come On-a My House," "Mañana," "The Doggie in the Window," "Behind the Green Door," and the immemorial "Purple People Eater." As a kid, I was swept up by these songs quite as much as so many of my countrymen. I have a painful memory of standing before a mirror caressing into shape an ambitious pompadour I wore at fourteen and singing a little number titled "Cincinnati Dancing Pig" (we were, I seem to recall, invoked to witness him do "the barnyard jig"), when my learned and immensely dignified grandfather walked into the room. At that moment, gazing upon his idiot grandson, he must have felt that his leaving Bialystok fifty-odd years before had been a grave mistake.

A number of the famous male singers of my youth were notably cheesy and tended to sing songs about their quite hopeless enthrallment by love. Such singers as Don Cornell, Al Martino, Tony Martin (whose real claim to fame was his marriage to the beautiful dancer Cyd Charisse), and particularly Frankie Laine specialized in the big heartbreak numbers. The torment caused Frankie Laine by a woman named "Jezebel" (whose "eyes promised paradise") was almost more than one could bear to contemplate.

Laine, a Chicagoan of Italian ancestry, had some of the greatest record hits of my adolescence. Along with "Jezebel," he scored with two western songs—"Mule Train" and "The Cry of the Wild Goose." This was before television, and so one had to imagine what Laine looked like. Whips cracked while this man sang, rhythms pounded like the heart of a miser in a French restaurant in New York, and I imagined Frankie Laine to be a darker and perhaps more muscular Gary Cooper. When he appeared at the Chicago Theater, which in those days—the late 1940s and early 1950s—had stage shows as well as movies, I betook myself there to see him in person. A profound letdown doesn't begin to describe what happened. Frankie Laine was a thickset man with rather a large nose who wore a pretty obvious toupee. This "brother of the old wild goose," as he styled himself in one of his songs, seemed more fit to own a Buick agency or a State Street jewelry store than to drive the mule train that he kept screaming about in his hit song. Not the last of life's little disappointments, I fear.

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The Chicago Theater was something of a hangover from vaudeville days, and the headliners of its stage shows were almost always singers. I saw there a flash-in-the-pan singer named Johnnie Ray, who after two big hits, "Cry" and "The Little White Cloud That Cried," disappeared. On its stage I saw the elegant Billy Eckstine, wearing one of his famous high Mr. B. shirt collars and singing "Everything I Have Is Yours." Joni James, a singer who had had a hit during my high school days called "Let Me Go Lover," stopped off to play the Chicago Theater on her way to obscurity.

The Four Aces, my favorite group in those years, also appeared at the Chicago Theater, singing their immensely stylized songs, which contained such lines as "as we danced the night away, my heart said she's for me." They wore gold-colored tuxedo jackets and their hairdos made them look as if they came straight from the Exxon Valdes oil spill. The Crew Cuts, another foursome, this one from Toronto, sang at one of our high school dances at the Edgewater Beach Hotel; they, surely it cannot so soon have been forgotten, gave the English language the phrase "sh-boom, sh-boom."

By the time I saw Nat King Cole—again at the Chicago Theater—he had already entered his hit-record and therefore high-popularity phase. I heard him sing his signature songs from this period, which included "Mona Lisa," "Dance, Ballerina, Dance," and "Walkin' My Baby Back Home." Melodramatic and a little foolish as these songs are, Nat Cole lent them some of his own immense dignity. He was a very elegant man, with a diction and timbre, if I am using that word correctly, that were like no one else's. Because he sang love songs without seeming to want your girl, he was the first black singer to break through and find himself in the empyrean of popularity wherein dwelt such singers as Bing Crosby, Perry Como, and Frank Sinatra. For a time in the 1950s, he had his own television show.

I came a little late for the young Frank Sinatra, who drove bobby-soxers bonkers, but I do remember that the movie *From Here to Eternity* put him back in business as a big-time draw. He was a marvelous singer who was not without a flaw or two as a human being. He was known for flares of terrible temper, during which he might do something humiliating to a studio musician; later, to make it up to him, he might, bighearted guy that he is, buy the musician's parents, say, the town of Kenosha, Wisconsin.

My own sense is that the late-night hours Frank kept may have made him cranky. This is a man, after all (if we are to believe the evidence of his songs), who was regularly out in the wee small hours of the morning, when it was a quarter to three, no one in the place but the bartender and he; and even when he went to bed he kept imagining some girl dancing on his ceiling, from "underneath his counterpane." (Go figure people's taste in bedding. You don't suppose Frank slept in a canopy bed, do you?) Doubtless, these bad habits were reinforced by the mood indigo that he suffered, which first came upon him when his baby said good-bye. But he, Frank, could sing, no doubt about that. In a novel by Willie Morris, the hero thanks Frank Sinatra and Nat King Cole for what little sexual success he had in high school.

Fred Astaire, whose singing I have come to like more and more (and for whom Irving Berlin said he enjoyed writing more than for any other singer), hadn't Sinatra's problems. His songs, like his movies, are pure, sweet fantasy, and on the whole charmingly upbeat. Apart from having to undergo the mild depression of a foggy day in London town, when even the British Museum appears to have lost its charm, most of the difficulties Astaire encountered took place on the dance floor, as when a woman he admired danced every dance with "that same fortunate man"—not him. Yet Astaire did log more than his share of time dancing cheek to cheek, which, you might say—actually he did say it—is nice work if you can get it, which he did. As made plain, in another song, he was dancing and he couldn't be bothered now.

Fred Astaire's indomitably cheerful songs, implying days spent in ascots and buttery cashmere jackets and nights spent in white ties and tails, always suggested urbanity and suavity, with only occasional dips into self-pity ("A Fine Romance," "Let's Call the Whole Thing Off"). In this, Astaire was anomalous. Self-pity has been the keynote emotion in much of American popular music. You have either lost or cannot obtain the affection of the one you love; your innate qualities of sensitivity, constancy, and profound affection are not appre-

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ciated. Songs pledging undying affection—"I'll Never Stop Loving You" is one that comes to mind—were big. George S. Kaufman was probably closer to capturing the truth of the matter when he said that he would have preferred it if Irving Berlin's song "Always" had been instead titled "Thursday," so that its clincher line would go, "I'll be loving you, Thursday."

Self-pity is probably the only authentic emotion that adolescent boys and girls feel, which partly explains the pre-eminence of popular music in my era. I know I felt self-pity myself, though I'm not sure that I didn't have to whip myself into it artificially. Even though I must have felt young love—"They tried to tell us we're too young" was a line in a hit song of my adolescence—my youthful existence lacked genuine romantic drama. As a boy, I surely yearned, but never can it be said that I pined—I didn't really have the attention span for extended pining. I should have liked to have been the kind of fellow who could drive women mad with longing, even the worthless kind that stimulates certain women. But I soon enough sensed that these were not the roles central casting had put me on earth to play.

In 1953, when I was sixteen, Raymond Chandler, complaining about the low quality of public education in America, wrote to a friend that "about all they teach there is the increasingly simple art of seduction." I for one could have used that course, but—damn—it wasn't offered at my school. I left no string of broken hearts, paternity suits, or attempted suicides in my wake. As a youth, I was, not to put too fine a point on it, a less than fully convincing seducer.

In my lifetime I have felt jealousy and I have known sexual envy, but even as an adolescent, I never felt the need to devote myself, full-time, to the great sex chase. The world, in Ira Gershwin's rather mortal phrase, never had to "pardon my mush," though, as a boy and young man, I had many a crush. Yet I don't believe I ever made an entire fool of myself in pursuit of a woman—perhaps only a third or half a fool. This left a fair amount of free time for reading, sports, and popular music.

Popular music is, of course, almost entirely about the sex wars: about yearning and love unrequited, about betrayal and consummations left at the stage of devout wishing. It is music to fantasize by. None of this is to say that popular music didn't stir me—or doesn't stir me still. When Louis Armstrong asks for "a kiss to build a dream on," allowing how his imagination will build upon that kiss, I do believe I understand him. But perhaps the last time I took this music altogether seriously was in high school, in the age of sexual awakening.

A friend at dinner not long ago claimed that he considered most fish as no more than a vehicle on which to convey sauce to the mouth. In a similar vein, when I was in high school, music was, through dancing, a way to get close to girls. Mine was the last generation that went in for what is now called slow, but would more accurately be called close, dancing. Our dancing came just after the jitterbug, danced to swing music, and before the twist—the first of the non-touching dances that began in the early 1960s—and all the autoerotic solo dancing that followed.

Every so often at a wedding or other large party where a band has been hired, a couple in their late fifties or early sixties will hit the dance floor to do a jitterbug. What great fun it looks! The last jitterbugging couple I remember from high school days was Frankie Sommers and Nancy Shaffner. Frankie, a couple of years older than I, was one of the golden boys of my youth. He could throw a football sixty yards, and nothing ever got past him in his position in left field. His voice had a charming rasp, and his smile could light up an alley in a terrifying neighborhood.

Nancy, like Frankie, was small. She wore braces and had a slight lisp. Frankie and Nancy—they seemed a perfect couple, and they went on to marry. I gather that they, too, stayed married. They were a smash on the dance floor, bopping away to a Count Basie or Duke Ellington tune. So good were they that, once they began, everyone else left the dance floor the way dancing couples cleared the floor for Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in the movies. Frankie, who had the build of a gymnast, would toss Nancy in the air, or dip her across his hips, or swing her between his legs. Fantastic stuff!

The rest of us, more earthbound, slogged away at our slow dancing. "Graduation's almost here, my love," with the preceding line, "should the teacher stand so near, my love," was the kind of lyric to which we vibrated. "I wanna be loved with inspiration" was a line in a song in which the singers—the Andrews Sis-

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ters—went on to make plain that they were in "no mood for turtledoving." Neither, let me say here, was I, who was ready at all times to get "On a Slow Boat to China," firm in my belief that "Love Is a Many Splendored Thing."

Intellectuals don't dance. Or so, accused of acting out of character, I was told as I came off the dance floor with my wife a few years ago in San Francisco. Clearly I am an exception to an entertaining, but less than entirely sound, generalization. I have always thought dancing a fine thing, wish I were better at it, and admire those who can beautifully glide around a dance floor.

In my last year of grade school, at the age of thirteen, I was sent to something called Fortnightly—though I could swear it met every Saturday afternoon—where some of my classmates and I were taught dance-floor etiquette and many intricate dance steps, almost all of which I have long since forgotten. I have retained the handy, all-purpose box step, the basis of the waltz and other dances, which has kept me from being the otherwise perfect wallflower. For a time in high school, I fancied myself a rumba king (also based on the box step) and doubtless made a considerable jackass of myself. In the 1950s, Latin American dances were big stuff; even the sedate Perry Como sang a hopeless tune called "Papa Loves Mambo." All I wish to say in my own defense is that, in a life marred by many sins, large and small, of commission and omission, at least I never danced the cha-cha. I hope this will be recalled in my favor on Judgment Day.

Social life at my high school, Nicholas Senn, was organized around dancing. Not only were there school and club dances, but records were played during the three lunch periods in our large assembly hall, and kids could dance there if they wished. There was even a goofy little jog step called the Senn Walk, in which the boy held his left hand far away from his body, making dancing couples look slightly contorted.

Disc jockeys were important figures in the Chicago of those years. One among them, a man named Howard Miller, who died not long ago, was a towering figure. He was said to be able to launch a song into popularity through main force—main force being the playing of a song over and over, which is to say plugging it ruthlessly, on his own show. He was married to a singer named June Valli, who had a weepy hit titled "Crying in the Chapel," now justly forgotten. Miller was also notable for giving optimistic weather reports, falsifying the temperature by as much as ten degrees—this in the undramatic days before the advent of wind-chill factors—so that, after getting his rosy report, one would step out on a winter's day and be blown off the sidewalk. When rock 'n' roll came on the scene, Miller himself was blown away as a disc jockey and began a rather blustery political talk show.

But the great disc jockey for young pseudo-sophisticates like me was a man named Jay Andres. He played light classics—such as "The Story of Three Loves," taken from the powerful theme of Rachmaninoff's "Rhapsody on a Theme of Paganini"—along with much Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Mel Tormé, Nat Cole, Dick Haymes, and other, cooler, more understated singers. His show was on at night, late-ish. The highlight of many a date came when an adolescent boy, driving his father's clunky Buick northward on the wonderful Outer Drive, turned to his date and, his hand hovering over the radio dial, asked, "A little Jay Andres?" The question retains its magic for me even now. "A little Jay Andres?" ranks up there with "A little champagne?"

The next stage in my popular-music life came at the University of Chicago, where the music of choice seemed to be folk music. I gave this a shot, went to a concert or two, and heard an impressive woman named Odetta, a young man named Bob Gibson, and a number of others whose names are now lost to me. The charms of a folk music hootenanny did not entirely escape me, though, if the truth be told, I had a bit of trouble "identifying," as the kids say, with John Henry. Whenever I heard the song, I replaced the name John Henry, a steel-driving man, with that of Al Rabinowitz, a cab-driving man among my contemporaries. But it was no go.

Two albums dominate the musical recollections I have of my days at college. One was Harry Belafonte's calypso album, with its red background and picture of the devastatingly handsome Belafonte in a green shirt on its cover. "Day O," "Jamaica Farewell," "Brown Skin Girl," and "Come Back Liza" were some of the songs on the album, and no greater music for singing in the shower was ever devised ("Come Mr. Tally Man, and tally me ba-

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nana"). I later saw Belafonte in performance, and, unlike Frankie Laine, he was in no wise disappointing but rather one of those extraordinary performers who you still don't want to leave the stage, even after a two-hour show.

The other album that I listened to over and over was "The Misty Miss Christy," torch songs by June Christy, who sang for the Stan Kenton band. Her songs about loneliness, desertion, betrayal, and general mistreatment at the hands of men made Ovid, in the *Heroides*, seem, in the crying-the-blues department, strictly bush-league. The cumulative impression the album conveyed was of a beautiful woman alone at a bar—smoking a cigarette and two drinks ahead of everyone else in the room—who had gotten a very raw deal. The fantasy that it allowed to college boys was that, with a bit of luck, one might meet such a woman and make her—and oneself—well. The questions about her—why had so many men left her in the lurch and was there something fundamentally wrong with so habitually unhappy a woman—were, of course, best left unanswered. In musical romance, only the unexamined life is worth living.

At twenty and twenty-one, I spent a bit of time in Rush Street nightclubs hoping to meet such a woman. I heard the beautiful Fran Jeffries, who was married to Dick Haymes, sing at the smart (as it would then have been called) club called Mr. Kelly's. At the old Black Orchid, I heard Peggy Lee, whose marriage to an alcoholic musician gave her sufficient reason to sing her own sad songs, which she did exceedingly well. I would occasionally drop in at the lounge at the Maryland Hotel, also on Rush Street; and, on the city's south side, I heard Miles Davis at the Sutherland Lounge.

Sad to report, I never met either June Christy or the June Christy–like woman, who might have called me Baby, or implored me to drink up and order anything I like, or asked me to come to the party and leave my blues behind. Instead, one day at Mr. Kelly's, I began a conversation with Mort Sahl, who invited me to walk back with him to his hotel. Along the way, we traded jokes, and one that he told me—the year was 1956—was that President Eisenhower and Adlai Stevenson were supposed to meet to discuss the state of the country before the election, but the meeting had to be canceled because Eisenhower's interpreter never showed up.

Music pervaded even the military. One of the first things a number of soldiers did with their first army paycheck was buy a portable radio. I remember the barracks in basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, in Missouri, flooded with music. The hit song of the time was "Tom Dooley," sung by the Kingston Trio. A bit of a downer, that song—Tom, you may recall, was invoked to hang down his head, poor boy he was going to die. Jukeboxes at the PX blared lots of Elvis. The year was 1958, and Elvis himself was then a private at Fort Hood, Texas. Two bunks down from mine, an Appalachian fellow named Bobby Flowers, who was drafted because his wife turned him in for failing to make alimony payments, used to sing about flying over these prison walls but for the want of angel's wings, and he made lots of jokes about his wife, while rather menacingly cleaning his M1 rifle.

For the *clichémeisters*, the decade of the 1950s is musically lashed to Elvis Presley. Not quite true. First, the King, as his fans now call the old boy, came rather late in the decade; and, second, you had to be an adolescent when he came along to get worked up about him. For those of us who came of age earlier in the decade, popular music meant an elegant club singer such as Julie London, with whom every man must have been in love (I know I was); it meant an immensely rich period for jazz; and it meant the end of the great era of musical comedy. For us, the fifties had nothing whatsoever to do with hound dogs, heartbreak hotels, and blue suede shoes.

Presley was many things, not least among them a southerner. As everyone now acknowledges, his songs combined black rhythms with a country-western outlook. In the army and later, while living in the South, I heard vast quantities of country-western music, and I came to like it, though I always, perhaps I should confess, felt rather superior to it. My pedantry seemed to get in the way. A song such as "Everybody's Somebody's Fool" seemed to me badly in need of qualification; and that God made honky-tonk angels seemed to me, as a reader of Thomas Aquinas, theologically dubious. Still, as a young man, I put in my hours in a few Arkansas and Texas honky-tonks (no angels sighted), where the atmosphere seemed to bristle with potential bottle-breaking violence every time the band took a break.

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I don't remember when *The Hit Parade*—which was first on the radio, then on television, and always, I believe, sponsored by Lucky Strike, L(ucky) S(trike) M(eans) F(ine) T(obacco)—ceased broadcasting, but over the years, in the back of my mind, I have kept a little list of songs that are on my Hate Parade. On this list appear: "Begin the Beguine" (Desi Arnaz), "My Way" (Frank Sinatra), "I Gotta Be Me" (Sammy Davis, Jr.), "I Left My Heart in San Francisco" (Tony Bennett), "Oh My Papa" (Eddie Fisher), "People" (Barbra Streisand), "Leaving on a Jet Plane" (Peter, Paul, & Mary), and "There's No Business Like Show Business" (by anyone). If there is a jukebox in hell, these will be the only songs it plays, relentlessly.

At the same time, there are some songs less than Schubertian in quality that, when I hear them, continue to give pleasure. Vaughn Monroe's "Ghost Riders in the Sky," which I haven't heard in years, is such a song. I find a good many of Dean Martin's songs—"Goin' to Houston," "That's Amore"—always make me laugh, perhaps owing to the utter casualness with which he seemed to sing them. I like "You've Got to See Momma Every Night" both for itself and because it reminds me of an old Groucho Marx story, the punch line of which is, "You've got to order sea bass every night, or you can't order sea bass at all." I adore Jimmy Durante singing "September Song" and George Burns singing the Lennon/McCartney song "When I'm Sixty-Four." Sometimes a wildly goofy line or two can put a song permanently in my mind, such as the song that, inquiring into the name change of Constantinople to Istanbul, asks why the former name "got the works" and then responds that this is "nobody's business but the Turks'."

Some songs stir up memories more surely than M. Proust's petite madeleine. Sarah Vaughan singing "Make Yourself Comfortable" takes me back to lengthy necking (what a funny word!) sessions in a living room on a shady street named Mozart, but pronounced in Chicago *Moe-zart.* The song "Fascination" recalls Gary Cooper, in the Billy Wilder movie *Love in the Afternoon,* sweating it out in a steam bath in Paris, while four violinists, in tuxedos in the steam bath with him, schmaltzily play that tune to comfort him in his sadness about losing the love of Audrey Hepburn. Every time I hear "Send in the Clowns," I think of taking my father-in-law, a very elegant man then dying of cancer, to a matinee performance of *A Little Night Music.* "Imagination," as another song says, "is funny."

Reading an article in *Esquire* about David Letterman, I learn that "he prefers music to stoke him, never to soothe." The music of Letterman's choice, it shouldn't surprise us, is rock 'n' roll. The comedian is, musically, of the rock generation. B.R. or A.R., Before Rock or After Rock, is one of the great, perhaps uncrossable, divisions of humankind. Those of us who came before cannot hope—and, let us speak candidly, do not all that much wish—to understand the musical tastes of those who came after. I, unlike David Letterman, prefer music that soothes me, for the world stokes me rather more than I like as it is, thank you very much.

Listening to Louis Armstrong sing almost anything makes me happy and reminds me of life's vibrant possibilities. Armstrong was, I think, a musical genius, a wonderful singer, and the best jazz trumpeter the world has known. "A man blowing a trumpet successfully," wrote the Welsh writer Rhys Davies, "is a rousing spectacle." But it's Louie the singer who really knocks me out. When he sings, in the divine rasp that was his voice, that it's not the pale moon that excites him, I almost have to leave my chair, so ready am I for bopping around the room. I wish I could do what I do one-twentieth as well as he did what he did. But even if I could, I shall, in my line of work, never be able to say, as he did: "Take it, Ella. Swing it!"

Certain phrases from the songs I love still send me: "the very thought of you"; "see the jungle when it's wet with rain"; "it never entered my mind"; "Argentines without means do it"; "no kick from champagne"; "hates California, it's cold and it's dark"; "diamond bracelets Woolworth doesn't sell, baby"; "see the pyramids along the Nile"; "the world will always welcome lovers"; "still I can't get started with you"; "that's the story of, that's the glory of love"; "nights were sour spent with Schopenhauer." I admire the general culture and wit that allowed Ira Gershwin to write that last phrase. Sad to think there is no one around today likely to write anything to equal it. "Oh, baby, say you'll be mine / we'll acquire a cozy cottage / and I'll read you Wittgenstein." Not, this attempt of my own, nearly so fine.

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Many of those phrases were written fifty and more years ago. During the first three decades of this century, a remarkable generation of songwriters arose—what other verb can one use to explain the presence of even minor genius—most of them Jewish guys with names such as Irving, Ira, Larry, Harold, Gus, Oscar, Sammy, and a few brilliant non-tribesmen named Cole, Noel, Harry, Johnny, and Hoagy. (My favorite songwriting name is Irving Caesar; he wrote the lyrics for "Tea for Two" when woken by Vincent Youmans in the middle of the night and claimed that most of his songs were written in fewer than fifteen minutes.)

S. N. Behrman, in a fine memoir titled *People in a Diary*, claimed that the figure in Manhattan and Hollywood during the 1920s who seemed to outshine everyone else in sheer vitality and effulgence of talent was George Gershwin. Gershwin possessed, according to Behrman, "the quality of joy"—joy unimpeded, as he points out, by modesty. Of his mother, Gershwin once remarked: "You know the extraordinary thing about her—she's so modest about me." Behrman recounts having to bring Gershwin the bad news that a woman he claimed to love was secretly married. "Do you know," he said, "if I weren't so busy, I'd feel terrible."

Ira Gershwin, the younger brother and generally thought the junior partner, was, in his quiet way, quite as impressive. He was intensely, though unpretentiously, literary, and in his late adolescence, as he reports in his autobiography, he "fooled around with French verse forms, such as the triolet, villanelle, and especially the rondeau." He had an interest in etymology and was a reader of the *Oxford English Dictionary*. Fred Astaire said of George Gershwin that "he wrote for feet," while Ira wrote for the head. "You reading Heine, I somewhere in China," appears in the same song, "Isn't It a Pity?," as the Schopenhauer allusion.

George Gershwin died at age thirty-nine. "He lived all his life in youth," Behrman notes, adding that "his rhythms were the pulsations of youth; he reanimated them in those much older than he was. He reanimates them still." George had the gorgeous vitality, Ira the splendid sophistication, and together they gave people who could spare a few moments to listen a sense of what lies behind the phrase *joie de vivre*. Gershwin's last word, on his deathbed, was "Astaire."

But if the Gershwins and others wrote songs that had about them the spirit of youth, it was youth of a different kind than we have come to associate with being young. It was youth untroubled, full of promise, agonizing over nothing greater than winning that boy or girl. "Moon and June and roses and rainbow's end" runs a phrase in a Blossom Dearie song titled "Down with Love." Ah, all those lovely, lilting rhymes: caressing/blessing, breeze/memories, arms/charms, sighing/crying, tree/bees . . . do it, even chimpanzees do it.

Why do so many of these lyrics remain in my mind when I worry that the four numbers I need to use the cash machine at my bank won't stay in my memory? They are more amusing, for one thing; but, more pertinently, they are also part of my own youth. I'm glad I grew up in a time when "writers who knew better words" had not begun to use four- or even no-letter words. I feel a debt, a positive obligation, to remember some of those words, just as I owe all those female singers—"vocalists," as they were then called—a letter of thanks for all those daydreams. "So here's to the ladies, God bless 'em," as the Victorians used to say. "Thanks, Billie, Ella, Sarah, Peggy, Julie, June, Judy, Jo, Lena, Lee, Rosie, Anita, Chris, Dinahs (Washington and Shore), Doris, Keely, Eartha, and Blossom. Thanks, I wish I could say, for the memories, but let me say instead, thanks for the sweet fantasies.

I find myself listening more and more to the best of this music. The pleasure, far from decreasing, seems greater than ever. A few months ago I memorized, for my own diversion, the lyrics to "Stars Fell on Alabama" and "Softly, as in a Morning Sunrise," which I now retain as mantras. I suppose I ought to be grateful that I can neither play the piano nor sing, else I should spend most of my waking hours sitting at the piano playing and singing this music. Instead, I walk around with all these tunes in my head. At my stage in life, where mild depression would seem only to make good sense, they provide a regular and by no means artificial boost.

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The New Confucianism in Beijing

WM. THEODORE DE BARY

IF ONE RECALLS how the Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution rent China in the late sixties and early seventies, with its bloody vendetta against any supposed remnants of Confucianism, or how youthful phalanxes of Red Guards, waving Little Red Books, waged lethal campaigns against intellectuals and state officials, targeted as covert agents of the ancient sage—or indeed if one's memories reach back to the early founders of the Chinese Communist Party, a generation of young iconoclasts bent on smashing the old "Confucian Curiosity Shop"—one may observe with some irony today, and perhaps with more of a sense of relief than of shock, how the current regime in Beijing is moving quickly to shelve its Marx-Leninist past and now claims for itself the right to speak for China's Confucian heritage.

Last October, the month in which the annual celebration has been held of China's national day—marking the overthrow in 1911 of the Manchu dynasty—a major international congress was held to commemorate the 2545th anniversary of the [putative] birth of Confucius. Scholarly conferences are no longer unusual occurrences, as they were in the days of the anti-intellectual Mao. What marked this one as more than routine or merely "academic" was the presence at the opening ceremonies of prominent figures in the leadership group identified with the policies of Deng Xiaoping: Gu Mu, widely credited as a prime architect of Deng's economic modernization program; Li Ruihuan, chairman of the Chinese Peoples Political Consultative Congress; Chou Nan, tacitly understood to be Beijing's "man" in Hong Kong; and a host of dignitaries—public officials and heads of academic bodies and cultural organizations—from abroad.

Most striking of the opening speeches at the congress was that of Li Ruihuan, who frequently quoted Mencius, the most liberal of the

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early Confucian thinkers, in his repeated admonitions for rulers to "listen to the people." Li's packed audience responded with enthusiastic applause. Mencius's brand of humanitarianism and egalitarianism may not exactly equate with Western liberal democracy, but it plainly appealed to populist sentiments among Li's hearers.

Best known, no doubt, among the featured participants in the opening ceremonies was Lee Kuan Yew, the former prime minister and founding father of Singapore. Lee's world reputation as a leading actor on the Southeast Asian stage—out of all proportion to the tiny size of his city-state—and now his prestige as an elder statesman, has outgrown even the monumental success of Singapore's economic miracle and Lee's early role in rallying Southeast Asian resistance to Communism. At a time when many writers in the West still saw Confucianism as a drag on modernization, and well before the Confucian work ethic, social discipline, and zeal for learning came belatedly to be recognized by others as a shared cultural resource among the Little Economic Dragons of East and Southeast Asia, Lee had seen these Confucian traits as key factors in Singapore's success—a fact all the more significant in the absence of any substantial material resources or strong territorial stake among these island states. On this basis, then, Li began the process of reviving, reinforcing, and reinvigorating Confucian traditions among Singapore's largely Chinese population.

One cannot gainsay the fact that Confucianism's attraction for Lee is his perception of it as an essentially conservative teaching, which could be supportive of the increasingly authoritarian, law-and-order style of politics that he is identified with in Singapore. Nor can we overlook the touch of anti-Westernism in Lee's espousal of Confucian social discipline as opposed to the decadent libertarianism and individualism he sees as undermining the moral fiber of the West and eating away at its social fabric. Thus, when Lee made a magisterial entrance on the stage of the great amphitheater wherein the Confucian anniversary was celebrated, he was greeted with a thunderous ovation, not so much because he embodied the wisdom of Confucius, as because, in large part, he stood before this admiring audience as the Oriental David who had repeatedly stood up to the Western Goliath and triumphed. Indeed, on that occasion Lee had little to say about Confucianism, as such, and much more against the Western media critical of him and in defense of the policies his government has pursued in Singapore. Probably few in that audience of would-be Confucians noticed how much Lee's self-confidence and self-assertiveness, and even the kind of strong personal machismo he projected, was worlds removed in manner and spirit from the gentle

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charisma of Confucius—from the modest, questioning, self-deprecating picture of the Master as it is conveyed in the classic *Analects*. Confucius most often came to inquire, to learn, and to discuss views with others. Lee declaimed from the pedestal of superior authority afforded him there in Beijing, and he left without waiting to hear what anyone else had to say.

Still, it would be a mistake to see no more at work here than a put-down of the West and liberal democracy. Lee himself and his Chinese colleagues have better things to do than twist the tails of Western leaders they consider only paper tigers—as they do, and did, such liberal democrats as Bill Clinton after the most-favored-nation/human rights showdown of last summer. Though not openly acknowledged, what these leaders probably sense, and correctly, is that their real problems arise from within the very modernization process with which they now so proudly identify. Moreover, there is reason to believe that the Confucian revival now being openly promoted in the Chinese press, shown in TV coverage of this event, and recently picked up as hot news by the Western media is only the latest in a series of developments issuing from a considered policy, adopted not long after Deng's rehabilitation and ascent to power following the death of Mao and the overthrow of the Gang of Four.

To some extent this development has manifested the new openness of the Deng regime in most aspects of Chinese economic and cultural life. To a certain extent it has also followed the reaction to the Cultural Revolution's wild onslaught against all vestiges of China's past tradition. Under Deng there came a systematic effort to restore the monuments of the past that had been desecrated by the Red Guards. These included Buddhist and Taoist temples and, to a lesser degree, even Christian churches. This restoration policy had the advantage of yielding a substantial monetary dividend, since, as prime tourist attractions, these monuments brought foreign exchange in support of the modernization campaign. The latter, however, had not been such obvious targets of the Cultural Revolution as the Confucian temples, and, besides, it was a more stunning reversal of Party policy to refurbish the Confucian shrines. These had traditionally occupied a prominent place, both centrally and regionally, in the official state cult. Now they were about to resume their old role in close association with a state initially hostile to them, but no longer so—a reversal not at all unprecedented in the history of Chinese dynasties.

To those familiar with this history, one of the sharper ironies is how the current regime has outdone itself in its subsequent, inordinate glorification of the Confucian shrines. Traditionally, these were

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more restrained and chaste in their artistic and architectural expression than Buddhist and Taoist temples, which readily indulged the popular taste for colorful painting, gaudy images, architectural extravagances, and every manner of fanciful expression of the Chinese religious imagination. This had not been so of the Confucian shrines. Whether in China, Korea, or Japan, these shrines tended to reflect the more rational and reserved manner of the educated Confucian elite, who were somewhat on guard against wild flights of the popular imagination. (During the sixteenth century, in fact, there had been a strong iconoclastic trend among the scholar-officials for the removal of images of the sages from Confucian shrines and their replacement by tablets only.)

Thus it is all the more striking that the current Communist leadership, and especially the octogenarians who once joined in "smashing the old Confucian curiosity shop," have so reversed their earlier historical course as not only to restore the former elegance of the Confucian temples but even to allow the installation of new, shiny images as well as pictorial representations of the most implausible, supernatural legends surrounding the life of the sage confabulated in later ages. (This reversal in course—or, more accurately, the transition to it—seems to have been facilitated politically at the main Confucian temple in Beijing by a typical compromise: converting one of the side shrines, auxiliary to the main hall, into a museum honoring—not some past Confucian worthy, but, incongruously—Li Dazhao, one of the founders of the Chinese Communist Party who earlier had helped "smash the old Confucian curiosity shop.")

Confucius came gradually to be rehabilitated through conferences on various aspects of Confucian philosophy and culture. One of the first of these, convened at Hangzhou in 1980, though held in the name of Chinese philosophy more broadly defined, saw discussion concentrated more on Confucianism than on any other philosophy. True, the tentative, exploratory nature of this move toward re-canonization was shown in the circumspection with which anyone at that earlier gathering hazarded a good word for the Confucians—at least while hard-line veterans of the Long March stood by, monitoring the proceedings and sometimes intervening as devil's advocates. Occasional long silences gave section meetings the atmosphere of a Quaker prayer meeting; the scholarly assembly waited quietly to see which way, or how far, a certain favorable or unfavorable thrust might carry. Overall, however, the clear message came through: Confucianism was no longer taboo.

The ice thus broken, supporters of a Confucian restoration began to organize themselves. In 1984 a China Confucius Foundation was

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formally established, with its main headquarters in Beijing and a branch office at the newly restored temple in Qufu, Confucius's birthplace in Shandong province. Officers of the Foundation were chosen from among personages then or formerly identified with the regime, including prominent Party men as well as academicians. Obviously, no such undertaking could have gone far without official backing; the sizable international conferences subsequently sponsored by the Foundation could not have been held without state support on many levels. These included a major meeting at Confucius's birthplace in 1987 and an even more important one in Beijing in October of 1989 to celebrate Confucius's 2540th birthday.

This latter conference was significant in several ways. It had been planned months before the student demonstrations broke out in May/June 1989, and a number of foreign scholars had agreed to attend. But after the bloody crackdown at T'ien-an men Square, many decided to boycott the meeting, lest their presence be taken to condone the repression of student and intellectual protest. (I myself decided to go, but I changed the topic of my talk to "The Confucian Tradition of Public Dissent," for which I was thanked personally by Chinese colleagues who appreciated my broaching the subject of dissent in that forum when they themselves could not.) The meeting itself proved quite uninhibited. It seems that the leadership wished to reassure friends abroad that open scholarly discussion, if not student protest, would be tolerated, and Chinese scholars present, even though most often sympathetic to the demonstrators, were glad to have foreign guests allay their fears that a boycott after the crackdown might lead to their isolation from the international community.

The sponsors of this 1989 symposium were no less prestigious than the celebrants cited earlier. Among the prominent speakers at the opening ceremonies were Li Xiannian, a senior Party and government figure (since deceased), formally listed as the chairman of the National Committee of the People's Consultative Conference. Present, too, was Goh Keng Swee, a close associate of Lee Kuan Yew. Goh was then president of the Board of Directors of Singapore's Institute of East Asian Philosophies, a cultural think tank and research center entrusted with the promotion of Confucian studies and education. He had played a major economic planning role in Singapore, prototypical to Gu Mu's in the Peoples Republic, and his presence suggested that in Beijing, as in Singapore, the Confucian program was inspired by political-economic, no less than cultural, considerations.

The published prospectus for the conference included a short background statement explaining the purposes of the conveners in the form of "A Brief Introduction to the China Confucius Founda-

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tion." Following is a slightly abridged English version (unedited), which reveals something of the mind-set and value assumptions of its promoters. Note in the first sentence the frank acknowledgment of government support, something American scholarly bodies would be unlikely to emphasize, and the obvious appeal for contributions from abroad (aimed no doubt at overseas Chinese especially).

The China Confucius Foundation is a nationwide people-to-people academic body supported by the government. It was established in September 1984. Its Honorary President is Mr. Gu Mu, former Vice-Premier of the State Council, Vice-Chairman of the National Committee of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Conference and famous economist. Its First Honorary Consultant is Mr. Zhou Gucheng, Vice-Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Chinese National People's Congress and famous historian. Its President is Mr. Kuang Yaming, the Honorary President of Nanjing University and well-known educationist. In addition, there are many scholars and noted personages engaged as honorary consultants, vice-presidents and members of the Council of the Foundation. . . .

The focal point of the whole work is to deepen the academic study of cultural ideas and to promote the development of academic undertakings. The China Confucius Foundation has rallied a great mass of outstanding middle-aged scholars round itself. The headquarters of the China Confucius Foundation is in Beijing with a branch office in Qufu City of Shandong Province, the native place of Confucius.

The China Confucius Foundation accepts subsidies from the government and welcomes contributions from people of all walks of life, social organizations and enterprises in and outside the country. To express gratitude to the contributors, the China Confucius Foundation will either present souvenirs to them or have their names inscribed on tablets, or erect individual tablets, or build small pavilions in their names in the native place of Confucius, depending on the amount of contribution. The fund of the China Confucius Foundation can only be used for the development of academic culture, such as to set up magazines, publish academic writings, carry out academic researches, discussions and exchanges, etc. . . .

The contents of academic research which the China Confucius Foundation wants to promote comprise Confucius, the Confucian School, China's traditional cultural ideas, the Oriental cultural ideas with China's traditional ideas as source of radiation, comparison of the cultural ideas of the east and west, etc. In the work of research, the Foundation always stresses free thinking and the practical and scientific attitude, advocates various methods of research, encourages democratic discussion between different academic propositions and viewpoints, so as to benefit the academic development, the exchange of ideas, the promotion of mutual understanding and friendship, and then proceed to the highest purpose of making contributions to the furtherance of civilization and progress of human society.

From this statement one gleans several key points, though the mix of them together may seem somewhat incongruous: (1) the emphasis on support from politically prestigious leaders (a theme reiterated

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in subsequent meetings); (2) the assurance of the academic character of its activities (no longer "politics in command," as in Mao's day); (3) the claimed support of senior scholars (specifically "middle-aged," not just octogenarians); (4) the suggestion that "Oriental culture" as a whole is derivative from the Chinese; hence all East Asians can rally around a center that, more than just Sino-centric, is essentially Confucian and universalist, thus belying any narrow, isolating, nationalism; (5) the implicit appeal for support from well-to-do overseas Chinese, who might also share Confucian sympathies (that is, did not suffer the effects of Maoism and the Cultural Revolution); and (6) the assurance of open discussion and the exchange of different ideas. Even if one discounts for the obvious promotional features (which are, in any case, realistic enough), the assurances given in the second and fifth items, subject no doubt to qualification in practice, nevertheless afforded hope that serious scholarly discussion could take place under the aegis of this group. The door was at least open to a kind of re-examination of Confucianism that had been difficult under Mao, so long as politics remained in command.

Still more significant was the keynote speech given by Gu Mu, the "noted economist," who was nominally honorary chairman, but was actually, more than that, a vital presence at the whole meeting. Since Gu's speech forecast what has become increasingly evident as the government's long-term policy in these matters, the following excerpts from the official English text are worth noting.

> The Chinese nation has had a long history and brilliant ancient culture. For a long period of time in human history, the Chinese culture, with the Confucian school of thought as the main stream, glittered with colorful splendor. . . .
>
> Culture serves both as the emblem of the level of civilization of a nation or a country and the guidance for its political and economic life. To promote prosperity and peace for a nation and for mankind in general, it is necessary to develop a compatible culture. In this regard, a proper attitude toward the traditional national culture is very important. It is inadvisable either to be complacent about the past or to discard the past and the tradition. The correct attitude is to inherit the essence and discard the dross.
>
> The Chinese people are working hard to build socialist modernization and a prosperous and strong socialist country. In order to reach this goal, we must develop and improve our new culture, which, we believe, should be national, patriotic, scientific and democratic. This calls for inheriting and reforming the traditional culture of our nation and parallel efforts to courageously and yet selectively assimilate the advanced cultures of the outside world, merging the two into an integral whole.
>
> As for the attitude toward the traditional culture and foreign cultures, there is no doubt that the traditional culture should be kept as the mainstay. . . .

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As is known to all, the idea of harmony is an important component of the Chinese traditional culture. As early as in the last years of the West Zhou dynasty three thousand years ago, ancient scholars elucidated the brilliant idea of "harmony making prosperity." Later Confucius and the Confucian school put forward the proposition of "harmony above all," and established theories on the coordination of interpersonal relations, the protection of the natural environment, and the maintenance of ecological balance. These thoughts not only made positive contributions to the prosperity of ancient Chinese society, but also have profound practical significance for the survival and development of mankind today.

As a keynote, the speech was meant to serve more than one purpose and can be read several ways. First, there is the point, as in the earlier prospectus, that culture should provide the guidelines for politics and economics (not the other way around, as with Mao) and that Chinese culture (read "Confucianism") should thus set the criteria for judging what is acceptable or unacceptable among the foreign influences to which China is inevitably exposed in the modernization process. In the context of the 1980s, this might sound new insofar as Confucianism was being reintroduced to a scene from which it long had been banned, but anyone familiar with historic Chinese debates on the issue would recognize it as a return to a nineteenth- and early twentieth-century reformism that sought to adopt Western methods while still holding to a Chinese "essence."

Another key point is the "ancient" and "brilliant" idea of "harmony making for prosperity." No doubt Confucius and the Confucians would have subscribed to this idea, though the Master himself chose to underscore the idea that peace and harmony depended on trust and confidence in the ruler, which could only be won by moral example, humane governance, and reliance on consensual institutions (the rites). Nevertheless, one can see the appeal here to peace and stability as the keys to economic progress (rather than class struggle à la Mao and the Cultural Revolution or, by contrast, the anarchy attributed by the government to the T'ien-an men demonstrators). Understood as a demand for compliance with or conformity to direction from above, such "harmony" today might yield the stability needed for economic progress, but hardly the fiduciary, consensual society Confucius characterized as "Harmony without conformity" (*ho erh pu t'ung*), much less the Chinese-type civil society Mencius advocated, with a class of activist Confucian officials constantly pressing the ruler to listen to the people and enact humane policies of benefit to them.

For his part, Gu Mu, while claiming the world-honored Confucius as China's own, and Chinese culture as quintessentially Confucian, presents Chinese tradition and the current regime as enlightened, progressive, and open to the world. Yet, by retaining and relying on

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the Confucian values of harmony and social discipline, according to Gu, it has "traditional" criteria for excluding decadent libertarian influences from the West—screening out the "spiritual pollution" already diagnosed as the source of the alleged unbridled disorders of T'ien-an men.

From a strict Maoist point of view, there is nothing new in this most recent attack on bourgeois liberalism as the alien virus infecting rebellious Chinese intellectuals. Mao himself had urged Communist cadres to "combat liberalism" in the early rectification campaigns of the revolution. What is different here, especially in contrast to the Cultural Revolution's earlier vicious attacks on Confucianism and bourgeois liberalism as the twin enemies of militant proletarian virtue, is that now Confucianism, not Marxist revolutionary morality, is to guard the gates against Western decadence. Meanwhile, niftily appropriated to Confucianism are the Western liberal causes of environmentalism and ecology, which the Communists had long before dismissed as specious imperialist pretexts for denying to undeveloped nations the benefits of industrialization.

This is not at all to say that Confucianism has now replaced Marxism-Leninism as the ideology of the one-party state. For the present, Beijing's line still calls for the reaffirmation of Communist orthodoxy and discipline. But the prevailing pragmatism of the modernization campaign in so many aspects of economic and cultural policy continues steadily to erode doctrinal orthodoxy. Although the Party can still compel lip service to timeworn slogans, it can no longer, by fiat, command assent or genuine commitment.

In this unfavorable climate, with much of the erstwhile Communist world (including the homelands of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin) having repudiated the original doctrine and practice of the Party, Beijing's pragmatic leaders are increasingly disposed to lean on a conservative version of Chinese tradition as the best guarantor of the status quo. Even at that, though, the status quo has its own real problems, caught in the obvious disparity between a failed Maoist morality of revolutionary class struggle and a new pragmatic emphasis on whatever gets results (which for the individual means: whatever enriches one). The leadership can hardly be unaware that this "new" morality (actually not so "new" to Chinese entrepreneurs of the past, but a view of self-enrichment traditionally contained within the larger Confucian concept of the common good) and its new motivation have proved deleterious to any ethos of service to society. This in turn has had serious adverse consequences, especially in education, as technically qualified scholars and teachers have been drawn off into more profitable uses of their talents, outside of school.

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Still more ominous, however, is the general lapse of society into a pervasive climate of aggressive self-seeking and corruption, as the burgeoning economy makes its advances accompanied by graft and collusion. This has been most evident among entrepreneurs and officials (especially the Party cadres who still control things at most levels of the society and economy), but it is seen as well among eager young Chinese of the new Yuppy generation. Here, then, is the heart of the moral-spiritual-ideological crisis: the insistence on retaining a one-party state when its revolutionary justification—that the Communist Party alone furnished the dedicated leadership for China's so-called liberation—has lost any semblance of legitimacy with the failure of its revolutionary program, the abandonment of its Marxist principles, and the forfeiting of its claim to any moral high ground.

Implicated in this crisis of public morality is the question of whether one can expect, as some prominent Westerners do, that liberalization and expansion of the economy will naturally bring in their train a gradual political liberalization, with greater public involvement in and support for a constructive political program. Recently, in the West, especially during and after the confrontation between the United States and China over human rights and trade policy in the summer of 1994, many observers consoled themselves with the thought that expanded trade and economic development would itself lead to such an improvement—that with growing affluence and a rising middle class, political liberalization would necessarily follow as a result of economic liberalization.

There may be some truth in this as a general tendency over the long term, but it makes assumptions not warranted either by Chinese history or recent experience. At several stages of Chinese history, commerce, industry, and a nascent middle class have grown to significant proportions, but the translation of these into a civil infrastructure has been handicapped by state-imposed limitations and stultified by bureaucratic complications. Again and again the Chinese have shown their entrepreneurial aptitude and skills whenever and wherever conditions were conducive to them (especially overseas and under the protection of Western law, beyond the reach of Chinese rule). Yet in the long run of Chinese history these capacities and tendencies have not prevailed in the homeland. The continuing dominance of a centralized bureaucratic state in China has frustrated what Westerners tend to think of as a normal sequence of economic, social, and cultural development.

In the present situation, what this means is that, if Western businessmen urge, as they did last summer, going slow on human rights and relying on economic development to do the job, an attitude

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similar to this on the part of Chinese businessmen may again, as repeatedly in the past, lead to an accommodation with the state, a modus vivendi between business and officialdom very similar to the limited bureaucratic capitalism of the later dynasties. This would result in a quite natural collusion based on shared self-interest: the state guaranteeing order and stability, if not interfered with politically by the entrepreneurial class, and the entrepreneurs profiting from the security and stability provided by the state. From this one gets an alliance of opportunism between businessmen and officialdom quite different from the liberal middle-class politics that is presumed to be the natural product of economic development in the West. There are already many signs of this collusion and rampant corruption between business enterprise and opportunistic officials in a position to profit for themselves. Yet, one may ask, where is there any evidence of businessmen in China actively interesting themselves in liberal democratic politics? Since this pattern of collusion and corruption between new entrepreneurs and old apparatchiks has become so widespread in former Communist countries generally, one can hardly ignore it as a powerful factor complicating the prospects for liberal democracy.

True, there has been a significant movement to extend and improve legal protection for property and investment and, in general, to regularize the conditions of trade. It is also true that businessmen and others who suffer from official corruption and favoritism wish there could be greater legal and judicial protection against these. Despite some serious remedial efforts, there has been little success in curbing corruption. Most businessmen, Chinese or foreign, play the game as best they can, often making payoffs themselves when it is to their advantage, and wondering all the while when they may run afoul of an arbitrary and unpredictable Chinese judicial system. A *Wall Street Journal* article of May 25, 1994, after reciting the woes of foreigners who have suffered from the vagaries of Chinese law, quotes one victim as saying: "I have a friend who does business here, who used to say, 'After China gets its economy going, that will eventually improve human rights.' Later this friend was arrested and detained himself. After his release he said, 'I was wrong before. First you have to improve human rights. Then you'll be able to improve the economy.'"

One striking illustration of the disparity between wishful thinking about economic and political liberalization and the realities of life in China is provided by two different headlines in the *New York Times* of May 25, 1994. One was the headline on Senator Bill Bradley's op-ed piece, titled: "Trade, the Engine of Democracy," in which he retreated from his earlier strong assertion of the need to press for human rights in China and instead optimistically proclaimed that

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expanding trade would, just by itself, inevitably pave the way to liberal democracy. In the business section of the same issue, the reality of the situation was exposed in an article headlined: "Between Marxism and the Market: A Chinese Manager Finds Corruption." The headline just about says it all. The legacy of dynastic rule and Mao's Stalinist state is still a major fact of life in China. It is anything but a level playing field, as the apparatchiks use the power of entrenched position radically to alter the rules of the market game. This is in fact the practical meaning—or a good part of it—of what Deng and his colleagues call "market socialism" or "the socialist market economy."

If more evidence is needed one might consider another estimate of the prospects for liberal democracy from a *Wall Street Journal* correspondent, Marcus Brauchli, commenting on the idea that prosperity brings democracy. Brauchli discounts the seeming analogy between China and what is happening in Taiwan (economic development leads to liberal democracy), pointing to the great disparity in income levels between the two. Brauchli then adds:

> A bigger obstacle looms: Chinese with money—those who might be expected to demand more democracy—fear they would be victims, not beneficiaries, of a one-person, one-vote system. Some 250 million people in China's bustling cities and thriving coastal provinces are vastly better off now than they were a decade ago—but the other 900 million Chinese are peasants, eking out life in medieval-like conditions. Would the rich give control over their lives and destiny to these poor? . . .
>
> Thus, many of China's newly rich prefer the stability of the old system to the prospective turmoil of an electoral free-for-all. They have seen the turmoil that resulted from political liberalization in the former Soviet Union.

One wonders if many businessmen, anywhere, would not come to the same conclusion. Have not those eager for trade with China and Vietnam been willing to forget about human rights and political democracy? Even those who speak for American business acknowledge this. One more quotation from the *Wall Street Journal,* an extract from an editorial of December 12, 1994, clinches the point. After reporting the Communists' persecution of a thriving Protestant church in Beijing, the attempt to silence its outspoken minister, and the government's assumption of what the *Journal* calls "a mission shepherding religion to extinction in the name of scientific socialism," the editorial concludes:

> The party ought to rethink its attitude. It gains nothing from harassing peaceful religious congregations or driving them underground; it only makes more enemies. And of course it forces companies throughout the United States and the rest of the free world to close their eyes to the fact

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that they're doing business with a government that engages in such persecution.

Can one imagine a more telling admission than this of the business community's ineffectuality in dealing with the human rights problem? Can one imagine a more supine and pusillanimous role for what Senator Bradley vaunts as "the engine of democracy" than the *Journal*'s ready concession that those doing business with China *must* turn a blind eye to such things? Can Chinese businessmen, who are far less free than Americans, be expected to do differently? What hope is there, then, for them to become a vanguard for liberal democracy? Indeed, the editorial seems fully to justify Mao's 1937 indictment of Western liberalism—and its Chinese incarnation—as merely opportunistic, ready always to compromise on principle, and fatally given to peace at any price.

But what of Confucianism itself as a force for anything but unquestioning support of the new dynastic establishment? Most young Chinese, if they have any yearnings at all for democracy, are unlikely to think of Confucianism as the vehicle to get them there. For most of this century, educated Chinese have learned nothing about Confucianism except the Party's negative characterizations of it as "reactionary" and "feudal." Quite apart from the closing of schools for years during the Cultural Revolution, and the turning over of instruction to workers, peasants, soldiers, and Red Guards, only a few college majors in classical studies have read any of the Confucian texts, while all students have been compelled to read the "classics" of Marx, Lenin, Stalin, and Mao. Other, increasingly rare, exceptions would be the likes of Jiang Zemin, concurrently General Secretary of the Chinese Communist Party, President of the People's Republic, Chairman of its Military Commission—in other words Deng's designated heir apparent—who came to both of the Confucian symposia referred to above, gave them his blessing, concurred with what Gu Mu said, and reminisced fondly about how his old-fashioned father had taught him in the home, outside of school hours, the Four Books of Confucianism.

As Jiang Zemin's case suggests, certain Confucian traditions may have survived in the home, primarily in connection with family life. These traditions are often characterized by a certain reciprocity, mutual support, and give-and-take within the family, rarely taken into account by the stereotypical renderings of Confucianism as an authoritarian, "feudal" system. Nevertheless, how much carryover there could be from such customary practices in the intimacy of the home, or even in family enterprises, into the larger world of political dis-

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course and the framing of governmental policy remains a question. Only with the reinstatement of some genuine Confucian culture, and the reading of basic texts in the school and college curriculum—which would require the retraining of a whole generation of teachers—could Confucian learning be articulated to the level of literate discourse so that it could have any significant influence on educated Chinese today, as well as on those who might participate in higher level decision making or policy formulation. Short of this, the New Confucianism in Beijing would amount to little more than mass indoctrination in official formulae, as mechanical and meaningless as the failed slogans of Maoism.

At issue here is whether Confucianism is to be recognized as more than just a social discipline and work ethic. Properly speaking, it is a form of liberal learning (in the classic sense of *liberal* as broadening and liberating, and not simply in the modern political sense). Today, mostly outside of the People's Republic, educated persons are becoming aware of the long-neglected but deeper and richer resources to be found in the learning tradition of Confucianism. It is precisely in recognition of the progress made in Confucian studies abroad that the leadership of the new movement wishes to establish links with scholars elsewhere, through its new International Confucian Association. What remains to be seen is how serious and substantial these links will prove to be. Skeptics have a right to question whether the whole transaction is not merely an exercise in the co-opting of scholars by cultural commissars.

Having attended three such meetings and having felt no overt constraint myself on what could be said, I would testify to their relative openness. At last October's symposium, in fact, I raised the question of whether a conference of Confucians could ignore questions of pressing public concern. At the opening ceremonies, with the Chinese leadership present for keynote speeches, I pursued the implications of Li Ruihuan's invocation of Mencius as follows:

> Discussions among scholars at conferences like this one have tended to avoid difficult political issues. If, however, we are serious about the study of Confucianism, we must recognize that Confucius and his later followers like Mencius had a strong sense of public responsibility and public service. Mencius said he did not like to appear argumentative, but his moral concerns compelled him to speak to difficult pressing issues. Thus Mencius had much to say about education, human welfare, economic and social justice, the legitimacy or non-legitimacy of profit seeking, political remonstrance, etc. So too in our own case, these pressing, shared concerns might warrant a series of conferences focussing on such current issues as human rights, in a spirit of mutual respect and on the basis of shared multicultural concerns. Let the new world-wide community of Confucian scholarship not just leave

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these issues to political figures who may not themselves be culturally well-informed. The latter have a right to expect from us scholars, on our own part, constructive advice in the spirit of mutual respect so impressively exemplified by Confucius himself. "Even in the company of just three persons, there must be someone from whom I can learn. Their good points I can take for emulation; their bad points I can take for self-correction." (*Lun-yü*, 7:21)

How much more should this be true in our company of so many hundred scholars!

Gu Mu and Li Ruihuan seemed to take no offense at this. In fact, they applauded it. Therefore, after the symposium, I prepared, in concert with other colleagues, a specific proposal for a discussion of human rights and sent it to the sponsors in Beijing. It read:

"The members of the undersigned American committee, in cooperation with the American Council of Learned Societies, the East-West Center, the Heyman Center for the Humanities and the Human Rights Center of Columbia University, propose to hold one or more conferences on human rights in a comparative Confucian-Western perspective, in order to promote non-confrontational, multicultural dialogue on the basic value issues underlying human rights concepts and practices. Possible topics to be discussed include:

1. Confucian concepts of the self, person and individual in relation to state and society. Self-discipline as the key to governance.
2. 'Rights' protected in Confucian ritual and Chinese law; the relation between rights, responsibilities and duties.
3. Human Rights in the perspective of Confucian concepts of social justice.
4. Religious and intellectual freedom in the Chinese and Western traditions.
5. Constitutionalism and the Rule of Law in China and the West.
6. A reappraisal, in historical perspective, of the earlier critiques of Confucianism (especially the May 4th movement).

In general it would be our intention to air all sides of these issues, pro and con, in a spirit of academic inquiry as well as of Confucian humane concern. We would hope to include scholars from China, East and South Asia, Europe and America."

The initial response to this proposal by the Beijing leadership has been favorable. Much remains to be seen as to how we can proceed and what can actually be accomplished by it. Still, at this point it seems well worth it to take the new Confucians in Beijing at their own best professions.

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Needlework

RHINA P. ESPAILLAT

Today I am her
sister She tells me again
how proud she is of

my careful cutting my neat
seams She pats my folded hands

You have silky skin
just like my daughter, she says
I miss her these days

Look, I tell her, here I am
Your one daughter Your one child

So you are, she laughs
and claps her hands Your father
was here this morning

I picture my father's bones
perched cross-legged on her bed

and smile She strokes my
cheek You have my daughter's smile
she says I miss her

these days And goes on to speak
of our mother's small stitching

✪ RHINA P. ESPAILLAT is the author of *Lapsing to Grace*, a collection of poems with line drawings. Several of her poems are included in the anthologies *In Other Words: Literature by Latinas of the U.S.* (Arte Publico Press) and *A Formal Feeling Comes: Poems in Form by Contemporary Women* (Story Line Press).

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What's the Story?

PAUL R. McHUGH

I TEACH PSYCHIATRY to medical students and residents by emphasizing fundamental matters such as defining terms, describing symptoms, and reviewing concepts—the ABCs, you might say, of this medical specialty. I choose this approach because, as all teachers know, most mistakes are with fundamentals. And, perhaps more important, what makes a point fundamental, makes it interesting.

Although I have taught this subject this way for more than twenty-five years, every spring I fret about the introductory lecture on psychiatry to the Johns Hopkins University medical students. I don't worry about my grasp of the material; I have covered it before. I don't worry about capturing the students' interest, because anybody can be lively when talking about insanity. My fear is that I will mishandle an almost inevitable argument with some members of the class over how to think about mental illness and that this will sour the rest of our time together. As it turns out, the issues I address are not simple. They challenge a deeply rooted supposition about psychiatric patients which students have absorbed from the popular culture and which they are loathe to surrender.

This supposition holds that psychiatric patients are fundamentally alike because people are similar in sentiments and psychological vulnerabilities. Their mental disorders therefore vary only in degree rather than in kind. Any distinctions in the symptoms of mental disorders depend upon burdens imposed by the biographical events, life patterns, and social settings where people do differ. This kindly intended "fellowship of mankind" idea that many of my students hold is one of those half-truths that cause me more trouble than any flat-out error.

The facts are that, although some patients derive their mental distress from life situations, many patients suffer from symptoms that

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are entirely distinct from normal psychological states, symptoms that rest upon bodily disease. Teaching students how to make this distinction and to appreciate its importance in treatment, prognosis, and research is the mission of my department.

I always show students a patient with this first lecture. At this point I am not trying to explain much. I just want to present an afflicted person and let his disarray speak for itself. This modest aim seldom runs smoothly.

On a typical occasion, I was sitting before one hundred students with a woman whom I encouraged to describe her thoughts and feelings. She stated that she was frightened because one of the NASA satellites had been preempted by the Freemasons to record her every movement. She believed that the satellite had been equipped to beam down an invisible, but powerful ray, forcing upon her blasphemous thoughts. She rejected any suggestion from me that this might be her imagination or the remnant of some nightmare. She was in the hospital because she called the FBI repeatedly. She wanted to meet the president and have him put a stop to this business.

With such a set of symptoms I felt safe in saying that she had an incapacitating mental disorder such as schizophrenia. After thanking her and helping her return to the ward, I began discussing her state. I noted that she was not afflicted by NASA or the Masons but by a delusion—an idiosyncratic, incorrigible, preoccupying false belief. I parsed that definition, emphasizing that psychiatrists underline the idiosyncratic features of delusional false beliefs to differentiate delusions from mistaken assumptions that might derive from a patient's social group or education. I emphasized that this helped distinguish the symptoms of an illness from ordinary errors.

A student shot up his hand. With disdain, he said, "That poor woman's beliefs would only be called false if you took a narrow view of them. You should consider them within her life of poverty, chaos, and neglect. Then you would see them differently. She developed thoughts about NASA and the Masons to make sense out of a frightening and perplexing world."

The student, a college anthropology major, elaborated on this theme, saying that the false beliefs of this person served the same function as the cultural myths and beliefs of other civilizations that give life sense and purpose in the face of mysterious natural forces. "Those beliefs," he said, "certainly are adaptive and no one thinks of them as symptoms of derangement or entitles them 'false.'"

I have learned not to interrupt such a student as he runs an indictment of me as both insensitive and narrow-minded. To do so would only encourage a glimmering notion amongst the other stu-

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dents that perhaps I *am* a social oppressor, placing an additional burden on the patient by calling her mentally ill.

But as I listened to his version—with its fashionable multicultural stance toward both the patient and me—I knew that I would have to put aside anything else I planned to discuss that day and concentrate on the issue of story explanations in psychiatry. The student was attempting to tell a story about this patient that, to him, made sense of her symptoms. If I hoped to teach him or anyone else in the class what they needed to learn, we first had to consider how stories worked sometimes to help and sometimes to hinder psychiatry and whether a story provided an adequate understanding of this patient.

II

So what's the story? Psychiatrists often use a story to make a patient's symptoms intelligible—capturing the array of symptoms within a narrative of settings and sequential events in the patient's life. The story is thus one of the clinical "tools" of psychiatrists. In fact, all psychotherapists eventually compose with the patient's cooperation some kind of story—a chronicle that reveals how psychological symptoms arise when such motivations as hopes, commitments, preferences, and fears collide with reality.

The "motive" theme distinguishes the psychiatric story from the standard medical case report, where the onset and progress of symptoms are also described. The medical report is an account of nature's power over human life through infections, neoplasms, genes, and the like. In case after case, medical reports describe the stereotypical progressions and characteristic effects of these natural processes.

The typical psychiatric story, however, replaces nature's power with human motives and suggests that distressing mental states emerge when a patient faces some conflict between purposes and events in his life, between expectations and reality. The story provides, through its narrative power, all listeners, especially the patient, with a compelling sense of insight into the symptoms as they relate to this conflict.

Psychiatric stories also work to persuade people to alter their habitual thoughts and behaviors—another distinguishing characteristic. Nowhere is this method more vigorously employed than in the therapeutic efforts of members of Alcoholics Anonymous. The central theme of the AA story is the bondage to alcohol—a powerful metaphor that weaves the different stories of drunken revelry into a common image, encouraging any new member of the group to begin to move from addiction to sobriety as one might move from slavery to freedom.

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The narrative power of a story, however, can, as I have learned from so many encounters with students, blind everyone to other explanations of the patient's symptoms, such as the effects of disease or the contribution of a patient's temperament. I was a student myself—an undergraduate, in fact—when I was first struck by the power of a story to create a dubious insight.

One bright day in the late 1940s, the poet John Ciardi substituted for our instructor, Mr. Ludwig, in English A, the freshman composition course at Harvard College required of those who had misspent their high school years and needed help learning to express themselves. Ciardi was not prepared to work on elementary matters that we, the backward freshmen, needed. He wished to show us the future as he saw it written out in Sigmund Freud's monograph on Leonardo da Vinci.

Ciardi enjoyed himself that day. He exuberantly explained how Leonardo's dream about a great bird beating its tail against his face when he was a baby was a prototypical Freudian dream. As Freud explained them, dreams hid from consciousness by representing, in a disguise, an unacceptable impulse—in this instance, Leonardo's homosexual urges. "That long tail, don't you know."

Ciardi believed that the Freudian "discoveries" of dream mechanisms and the dynamic unconscious unveiled the hidden motivations that lay at the heart of all human actions (not just pathological ones) and so by extension could explain the motives behind any of our behaviors. He accepted Freud's view that the key to Leonardo's difficulties in finishing some of his monumental projects was hidden behind this childhood fantasy. Ciardi became irritated when a couple of us—with little more than an offhand reluctance to accept his point without more evidence—challenged the argument. We thought the issue at hand had to do with the use of symbol and metaphor as explanations.

Several days before, Mr. Ludwig had emphasized, when teaching about figures of speech, that metaphorical images used by writers revealed as much about the authors' preoccupations as about the things they portrayed. That was, of course, a typical freshman composition concept, right from the syllabus you might say, but it was an idea that at the moment was big news to me. It was an "Aha!" moment, illuminating important distinctions in the images and language, such as those differentiating classical from romantic poetry.

And that's what we said to Ciardi. Freud has extrapolated a sexual image from a dream. That action, we suggested, may tell more about Freud's mind than about Leonardo's. But Ciardi had not come to listen to such talk. For him, Freud was a wonder and a source, not an

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author to be examined. "You must have some unresolved sexual problem," he said to me in particular, and thus provided my first (and far from last) exposure to the repression-resistance stratagem psychiatric storytellers tend to use against their critics. The class broke up into those persuaded by Ciardi's argument and those unpersuaded, with me a highly irritated member of the latter.

Ciardi was an established poet, an illustrious member of the English Department, a translator of Dante, a practiced expert on symbol and metaphor. Mr. Ludwig, I am sure, thought he was favoring us that day by finding such a distinguished replacement. But why did this gifted man come to have such confidence in Freud that he failed to work with what he knew from his own profession? What prompted him to bully us, the strugglers with language before him, rather than win us round with more information?

The story he accepted overlooked more plausible explanations for Leonardo's difficulties—especially Leonardo's efforts to push the artistic techniques of his time to the limit. Ciardi had found, within the license of metaphor, a warranty for dubious opinions. On many occasions since then with students of my own, I have been reminded of John Ciardi and how he was bedazzled by narrative.

III

The idea—that stories are compelling and therefore must be employed carefully in psychiatry—lay behind my argument with the beginning student who found in a story a way to make sense of the delusional patient. This student was disagreeing with me over what was important. I claimed that the patient's beliefs were delusional and therefore marks of schizophrenia—a disease that called for special kinds of help and for medication. He thought that her ideas were adaptive responses to a life of adversity that might disappear if she found some understanding and support from me in facing those adversities.

The student has mighty champions on his side. Freud would be there. He said: "That delusional formation which we take to be the pathological product is in reality an attempt at recovery, a process of reconstruction." Carl Jung is definitely in his corner. He said: "Closer study of [deluded individuals] will show that these patients are consumed by a desire to create a new world system . . . that will enable them to simulate unknown psychic phenomena and so adapt themselves to their own world."

These old warriors and their views are hardly unfamiliar to me. In fact, I know their value in enlarging the scope of psychiatry and in

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appreciating some of the responses of patients. Prior to their proposals, psychiatrists may have concentrated too much on description, diagnosis, and physical treatment of the patients in their care and may have slipped into habits of disregard for them and for the circumstances of their lives. These masters of psychotherapy encouraged psychiatrists to emphasize that patients are people—not simply objects of nature, but vital subjects like the rest of us with aims, purposes, hopes, and fears—in need of aid.

The problem was that these champions tended to overreach themselves. They extended their conceptions about psychiatric disorders so far as to depict them all as expressions no different in kind from the rest of human psychological life. In so doing, it must be said, they played a bit fast and loose with evidence in developing their opinions about human nature and the provocations of mental illness.

Freud was not bashful about this extension. He noted that "psychoanalysis [restricted to] psychiatry would never have drawn the attention of the intellectual world to it or won it a place in the 'history of our times.' This result was brought about by the relation of psychoanalysis to normal, not to pathological, mental life." And on another occasion, he wrote: "If we can temper the severity of the requirements of historical-psychological investigation we may be able to clarify problems which . . . merit our attention." Jung was unambiguous about his intentions and methods when he said: "I can only make direct statements, only 'tell stories'; whether or not the stories are 'true' is not the problem. The only question is whether what I tell is *my* fable, *my* truth."

Freud and Jung were certainly candid about their methods and aims. They were the most vocal proponents of the idea that all psychological symptoms arise from a patient's encounter with life and can be understood like the outcome of a story. They were also certain that such symptoms would dissipate when their provocations were understood and the patients—with the assistance of psychotherapists—found more adaptive ways of responding to their problematic lives.

These assumptions of Freud and Jung represent—as Auden said about Freudianism—"a whole climate of opinion." Jung has emphasized the importance of this aspect of his stories. A conceptual framework—that which he calls *his* truth and which comprises, of course, his assumptions—lies behind the tales he tells and makes them persuasive to him and to his patients. Psychiatric stories announce an author and what he thinks. My medical student's multicultural story and Ciardi's claims for Leonardo rest on their beliefs, their assumptions about how people behave, *their* truth.

Imagination and reality often coalesce in the assumptions of psy-

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chotherapists. The assumptions foster the stories the therapists tell and provide justification for claiming some events to be psychologically important and others trivial in a patient's biography. And because the eventual story is a re-creation of what the psychotherapist assumes, its very composition—the fitting of events together in a narrative form—reinforces the confidence of the therapist in the correctness of the climate of opinion from which he began. In psychiatry, this "hermeneutic round"—from assumptions to stories to assumptions confirmed for the more confident composition of further stories—can sweep hesitancy aside and produce a dominating orthodoxy in which all psychiatric disorders are seen as emerging from the inherent potentials of human beings when faced with adverse circumstances or unfriendly associates.

IV

I was first plunged into the steamy climate of this orthodoxy by two teachers at Harvard Medical School. They were professors of psychiatry who worked with narrative in explaining the illnesses of their patients and, in the process, they revealed implications embedded in their own assumptions.

Dr. Elvin Semrad was the Director of Residency Training at the Massachusetts Mental Health Center. He was a short, stocky man with a distant manner toward students. He had, however, a way that urged patients suffering from schizophrenia or manic-depression to talk about themselves. He encouraged them to describe their lives and their responses to the crises of the moment. His aim was to suggest to them (and those of us listening in) how they had found, in their disordered mental states, an escape from problems that beset them.

The patients were comforted by Dr. Semrad's attention. They resembled ordinary people in many ways. That was his point: much that is normal is to be found in patients with serious mental illnesses.

But that also was the problem. Dr. Semrad made so much of patients' normality that why they were ill became less obvious. These patients were hearing voices, they were driven by emotional states that did not abate, they had idiosyncratic false beliefs. They were different in some significant way, despite the many normal features they retained. That difference is what made them patients, and that difference needed explanation. Dr. Semrad's skill at unfolding their personal stories, and, while doing so, obviously comforting and encouraging them, permitted everyone to brush by that point.

After Dr. Semrad's death, admiring students gathered his remarks about patients into a book—a collection of maxims, mottoes, and

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adages. Stories usually produce aphoristic generalizations—words of wisdom—rather than scientific laws and hypotheses. Like the story itself, aphorisms tend to assert rather than prove a viewpoint. These particular maxims, however, are most useful because they demonstrate what Dr. Semrad believed—the assumptions from which he worked—and how these particular beliefs shaped the stories he told and the teaching he gave.

Examples of Dr. Semrad's axioms found in the book include: "Psychotic patients are no different than we are, just a little crazier." Or, "We're just big messes trying to help bigger messes and the only reason we can do it is that we've been through it before and have survived." Or, "Don't get set on curing her, but on understanding her. If you understand, and she understands what you understand, then cure will follow naturally." Dr. Semrad assumed—fundamentally from his allegiance to the story method and the prevailing Freudian climate—that the remarkable symptoms of the mentally ill were exaggerations of universal human problems and that these symptoms would disappear when everybody got the story right and set about helping the patient find a better way of adapting to life.

Dr. Semrad influenced a generation of psychiatrists, made them aware of the humanity of their patients, and for this he is warmly remembered. However, he not only failed to differentiate what was wrong with the patients, he skipped past this question with a set of plausible assumptions and epigrams that implied that every patient, like some lost child, was simply expressing distress in the only way he knew how. Dr. Semrad thought that what psychiatrists needed to help patients was not more knowledge of their disorders but more feeling for their plight.

My other teacher, Dr. Ives Hendrick, was a different sort of man. By the time I met him, he had let himself go. He looked seedy in a three-piece suit, down the front of which were food stains and burns from cigarette ashes. As he smoked and talked, he would flick his cigarette without drawing it far from his lips so that a regular flow of ashes spilled onto his chest and abdomen.

Dr. Hendrick's skill was in his grasp of theory. He could apply the orthodox explanation to any symptom, for he was saturated in the Freudian assumptions. He worked backwards from the patient's symptoms composing a story and weaving the symptoms into it, a story in which the patient could be pictured as attempting to adapt to stresses found in sexual conflicts and generating a psychological disorder in the process.

I once presented, to a hospital conference Dr. Hendrick was leading, a recently married young woman who was suffering from a classi-

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cal condition. She was anxious about swallowing her food and felt that a portion often stuck like a lump in her throat. This condition, which goes under the term "globus hystericus," is often a problem for individuals of an introverted and perfectionist temperament and resembles other hypochondriacal anxieties over bodily function both in its characteristics and its provocations.

Dr. Hendrick saw a symbol in this patient's symptom that fit into his assumptions about the nature of mental disorder. He interrupted my presentation by stating that, as a case of globus hystericus, this patient's problem was obviously conflict over oral sex and that the treatment plan should consist of trying to have her see this problem in the same way he did. He made these comments calmly to the audience of some ten to fifteen social workers and other counselors, all the while puffing on his cigarette and flicking ashes onto his vest.

His opinion was greeted with solemn noddings of heads by everyone in the room. I was floored. Was I really hearing a proposal at Harvard Medical School in Boston that would fit right into the sexual banter of my guttersnipe friends back home in Lawrence? Did the sexual images and obsessions of adolescence reach so far that even Harvard medical professors couldn't resist them?

I was also embarrassed for the patient. The proposal struck such a coarse, degrading note. Here was this grubby guy pontificating to a room full of somber and rather condescending people, all of whom acted as if some great truth had been uttered—before, I should say, an attempt had been made to interview the patient and consider what things other than sex might be troubling her. No duty to fact could withstand their ardor for metaphor.

These two psychiatrists were narrators of mental disorder and actually had similar assumptions about the sources of psychiatric symptoms. They were both members of the Boston Psychoanalytic Institute, which was devoted to promulgating an orthodox Freudian perspective on mental life. True enough, they began at opposite ends of the story. Dr. Semrad began with the person and never quite reached the illness, having been waylaid by the fascinating details of normality. Dr. Hendrick began with the symptom and never quite reached the person, having recast the patient's worries into a symbol of carnal conflict and letting it go at that.

Neither doctor, though, seemed baffled by anything about the patients. Both were confident that the explanations their stories provided were adequate. They were certain about their underlying assumptions and never questioned them. They presumed that the life events they emphasized for the patients were the most important features to understand. Eventually, they produced a psychiatry of

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categorical mistakes and narrative error, primarily because of the assumptive world to which they were too faithful and in which their final conclusions were hopelessly embedded.

V

In one sense, the Freudian era is over. The "climate of opinion" that envisaged human beings as puppets of the unconscious manipulated by such stirrings of sexual conflict as Oedipal complexes, castration fears, and penis envy no longer dominates the psychiatric profession. But, in another sense, an essential idea—of which Freudianism is simply one of the examples—lives on in the views and practices of many psychotherapists who restrict their explanations to the story.

These therapists assume that human sentiments are so alike, human vulnerabilities so identical, and human expressions of distress so similar that any psychological disorder must be an adaptive response to a misadventure, trial, or burden. The presumption is: where there is present smoke of mental illness, there must be, at the least, past fire of mishandling and probably mistreatment that distorted the natural course of the patient's psychological development. If these provocations are unappreciated or unremembered by the patient, then their implications and existence must be revealed to him through psychotherapy. The biography of the patient, therefore, must be explored until the damaging events are discerned and the real story behind the mental disorder—sometimes presented as a drama starring those quasi-persons, id, ego, and superego, that Freud invented—is understood by everyone.

Great implications that extend into attitude and action are tied to the view that psychiatric patients are essentially the same. For example, as the medical student rejects the categorical features of schizophrenia in the patient I presented and sees her delusions as a natural effort to adapt to life's adversities, that student must at least suspect the parents and other relatives of the patient as potential sources of the adversities that beset her and, *even before evidence can emerge*, will approach them in a suspicious way. Psychiatric stories based on the assumption that only life's burdens can produce disorder have in the past led to depictions of parents of schizophrenic patients as "double binding" or "schizophrenogenic," and parents of patients with early infantile autism as generating the condition in their offspring through cold and obsessional child-rearing practices.

These false views have been disastrous to everyone. They have put therapists and families at odds with one another at the very time when they need to cooperate in the treatment and rehabilitation of

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these afflicted patients. As well, the therapists' opinions delayed research into these conditions for years. By mistakenly presuming that the causes of these conditions were known and the family complicit in provoking them, physicians undermined any chance of a cooperative alliance with the family in research.

The assumption that something *must* have happened if a mental disorder is present has provided an entry for zealots and charlatans into psychiatry. There have been Marxist therapists, feminist therapists, and sociobiological therapists—all attempting to write their presumptions into an explanation for mental disorders without a comprehensive study of the conditions themselves. In the last few years, as we all might have expected from the presumption that only life's burdens can produce disorder, patients have been told by therapists that their mental ailments were expressions of (you name it) infantile sexual assaults, satanic cult abuse, space alien abduction, or even irritating remnants of problems "unsolved" in some prior life in other centuries. This is the story explanation gone wild, with immeasurable damage to public confidence in the standards of practice represented by psychiatry and psychotherapy.

It is simply not true that mental disorders are all of one kind, varying in degree but not in nature. To make this clear, psychiatrists must confront the half-truth that the kindly intended "caring" fellowship-of-mankind idea represents. Some mental disorders are expressions of bodily disease. Others represent the effects of body-based drives either innate, such as hunger and sex, or acquired, such as the addictions. Some disorders are, like grief, the understandable outcome of life events. Other conditions depend upon vulnerabilities within the patient's constitution, such as emotional instability or mental retardation. Psychiatrists are responsible for the treatment of all these different conditions and must distinguish them to do so.

There should be no mystery about the treatments these conditions entail. Psychiatrists seek to cure diseases, interrupt behaviors, comfort the grieving, strengthen and guide the vulnerable.

The psychiatric story—a narrative recounting of how a person's hopes, desires, purposes, and constraints influenced the direction of his life—fits into every one of these treatments, both those that rest on medicine and those that depend on talk. It provides a natural and coherent context within which to appreciate the patient and his troubles. An understanding of context—the way this individual is unique even as he suffers from symptoms common to all who have his mental illness—illuminates the diagnostic task, transforming it from a simple process of attaching a label to a patient into something more like portraying a person's misfortune.

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Narrative details arouse everyone's compassion for the patient and mediate the alliance between him and his physician. The story uncovers how this patient's character and life plans were affected by the disorder and what responses come most easily to him as he and his physician attempt to deal with it. But—and this is the big *but*—the context of a life should not be confused with the cause of all mental disorders or made the sole focus of therapeutic attention as though guidance were always synonymous with cure.

The story method and psychotherapy work together most straightforwardly when the patient's problems truly are context-driven and tied to universal human themes—grief from loss, fear from threat, demoralization from failure or rejection. Apt stories that provide an empathic understanding of these themes are as many as the predicaments in life and the individuals who encounter them. Freud and Jung identified some of these predicaments, but most of them are specific to the patient at hand and come to light in the midst of psychotherapy, where the patient and the therapist work together to get the story right.

Story-driven psychotherapy also is a crucial part of the rehabilitation of patients afflicted by psychiatric symptoms from other sources, such as disease. For example, patients with manic-depression need medication for their illness, but they also need psychotherapy to understand their affliction and to find ways to live effectively despite its intermittent disruptive symptoms. Any psychiatrist with a knowledge of this illness, as well as the story of its specific intrusions into the life of an individual, can and should provide both the medicine and the psychotherapy to the patient simultaneously.

Psychiatrists who try to work without the story forgo a vital way of appreciating their patients' predicaments. However, psychiatrists who dwell only on stories to explain mental disorders often misinterpret and misrepresent them. If these psychiatrists teach others to impose narrative solutions upon clinical problems arbitrarily, prematurely, and without attention to evidence, they will cheat their students of the knowledge and experience needed to join the group advancing this medical specialty in the future.

VI

All of these thoughts are at work in my argument with the medical student at the first lecture. I am far from denying that story-based ideas have helped psychiatric practice. What I am saying is that sometimes the story is a fable and—despite the kindest of intentions—does not fit as an explanation. For example, when we are confronted

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by a patient suffering from the symptoms of schizophrenia, the patient's domination by illness can be obscured for a student who reaches into the contemporary fashions for a story that will make the patient's confusing presentation intelligible. The patient has become a character in a tale the student can imagine rather than a person afflicted with a condition the student must come to learn.

All medical students, and eventually the public, need to realize that stories are helpful tools in psychiatry. But if used without reflection on their potential to become myths, medically authorized stories can produce a prolonged misdirection for everyone—doctor, patient, and family alike. Physicians, because they can do much harm with the wrong story, are duty-bound—in ways that poets are not—to check the story against the facts.

Although my first lecture often is disrupted, and even occasionally produces more heat than light, there are other lectures to come and clinical experiences on the wards that I go through with students over the course of their education. Eventually, this teaching, tying the explanations and the treatments of mental disorders together and indicating how our narrative instincts can lead us astray, wins out with most of them—not with all, I have to say—because the patients are around to remind us continually of the numerous ways we can get things wrong and, happily, the illuminating occasions when things do go right.

Edward Shils

1910–1995

Member, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR *Editorial Board*

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Incident at Third and Woodlawn

RICHARD CECIL

The flaming trees, like girls on prom night dressed
in orange and gold they'll change to gray tomorrow,
distract me as I step into the street.
A horn, a brake, a turning driver's scream—
I dodge her bumper, hopping to the sidewalk,
luckier than that squirrel laid by the curb.
He's flattened, abstract, except for his glassy eye.

Meeting his stare reminds me I've been struck
down twice by cars. Once, looking neither right
nor left, I raced toward Carol Anne's yellow curls
bobbing on her neck across the street.
When I woke up, unhurt, one whole day off
from grade school with an X-ray of my skull
for a souvenir, I said I'd learned my lesson,

but twelve years later, many states away,
musing on the date I hustled toward,
I got knocked down again, by a swerving teen
on her first day of driving and my last
on earth, almost. Looking up I wondered
if stars I saw were real, or the kind you see
unconsciously in transit to your death.

They turned out real—the Big Dipper, Venus
glittering green beneath the crescent moon.
The stretcher crew so gently lifted me,
I sighed like a taken-care-of child.
Once more, X-rays showed no fractured bones,

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and when I knocked, hours late, at my date's door,
my bruises turned her rage to sweet concern.

It's half a lifetime since her frown unwrinkled
in dim porch light to wide-eyed sympathy,
but I can see and feel that same change, now,
as sun breaks through a rift in mottled sky
and brushes my face like her unfisted hand.
The smiling sun and her gorgeous daughter-trees,
tossing down the favors of their leaves,

seem to love me as she seemed to, then,
loving, really, only my persistence
in trailing beauty like a bee in fall,
when threatening frost turns flowers into gems
and trees to flowers, and men in their forties
to squirrel brains. Oh Nature, take my hand
and help me safely cross to brown November.

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Morning

NIKIA LEOPOLD

Dawn leaks through cracks
made by branches,
through slits of birdcalls.
Dreams burn off,
rising from quiet houses
like steam.
The paper lands
on each walk
with a flat slap
of facts,
and we wake once more,
sense the body's
precious oils and salts,
stretch and stand,
grateful even for the stiffness
that roots us
to this day.

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The Red Room

Stephen Crane and Me

LINDA H. DAVIS

IT BEGINS IN ANY NUMBER OF WAYS: as a faint stirring of the senses, an alertness at meeting someone attractive and new. Biographers sometimes describe it as a feeling of being tapped on the shoulder—as though one is called or chosen to write the life of another person. For me, the call to write a biography of Stephen Crane came when I wasn't looking for a subject. I happened to read a Crane story, and I saw myself in it—saw, in fact, my lifelong obsession in it. It turned out to be an obsession I shared with Stephen Crane.

When Stephen Crane decided to color everything in his writing room red, his friend Mark Barr, who knew something about chemicals, "gave 'scientific' reasons, determined by Charcot, to dissuade him." But Crane (who had never had much use for doctors or for science) would not be dissuaded. The walls, ceiling—even the carpeting—were colored a startling red—"bright scarlet," said Barr.

This was in 1899 or 1900 at Brede Place, an ancient English manor house that Crane was renting in East Sussex, England. Red was Crane's color. He loved red—red flames and red firelight, red leaves, red suns, red dresses, red neckties, red-headed women. (The lady of his house herself had natural red-gold hair that some people thought was dyed.) He used the color amply in his writing; most memorably, of course, in the title of *The Red Badge of Courage*, the remarkable Civil War novel published in 1895 that had made him world famous at twenty-four. He wanted red all around him.

Pegged as a war writer after *The Red Badge of Courage* appeared in 1895 (it had been serialized, in butchered form, in the *Philadelphia Press*, the *New York Press*, and other newspapers in 1894), he had

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written war stories and war dispatches until he was heartily sick of the subject. "Hang all war-stories," he grumbled as early as 1896. He had done better work than "the accursed Red Badge," as he called it: in his powerful novella, *The Monster*, and in some of the finest short stories anyone had written—"The Blue Hotel," "The Bride Comes to Yellow Sky," "The Open Boat" (based on Crane's true adventure after a shipwreck when he and three other men survived thirty hours in shark-infested waters off the coast of Florida, in a ten-foot dinghy), and, in 1899, in "The Upturned Face."

Written in spare, taut prose—a pared-down style that bears little resemblance to the adjective-laden writing that had made Crane famous—"The Upturned Face" concerns the burial of a soldier in wartime. It derives its tension from the "chalk-blue" face of the corpse that is exposed to view throughout the proceeding, unsettling the soldiers engaged in burying him. It is a stunning story, tapping the fundamental human fear of death.

That Crane could turn out a near-perfect short story at a time when he was sick (he was suffering from tuberculosis) and frantically engaged in hackwork to pay his debts—writing a bad novel, *The O'Ruddy*, which he knew was bad; overseeing a lifeless series called Great Battles of the World, which Kate Lyons, the common-law wife of the late English writer Harold Frederic, was researching and actually writing—was a kind of miracle. "The Upturned Face," which would have been cause for celebration at any time in his career, appeared as a lone rose blooming in a garden of weeds.

In the red room at Brede Place, Stephen Crane sat in near stillness at a long writing table illuminated by an oversized lamp with an incongruous, frilly taffeta shade, writing against time, slowly writing words on foolscap. Though he was only twenty-eight—"the boy," "the marvellous boy," his writer friends called him—Stephen Crane, in 1899, had already passed the peak of his fame. He wore this fame heavily. His wonderful large eyes—deep set and gray blue, like the sea—were shadowed; creases were already etched around his mouth, which was half-hidden by a scraggly saloon moustache. He was a picture of ruined beauty: handsome, classical features—finely arched brows that a woman might envy; an aquiline nose, and full lips behind the overgrown moustache—but thin and tired looking, with very bad teeth. His soft, tawny hair was not tousled but limp; his pale skin, yellowish. (It had always been yellow.) He'd been "feeling vile" since the summer, when he was sent home from a correspondent's assignment in the Spanish-American War with a mysterious high fever. In a rare admission of ill health, he wrote a friend that "the clockwork is jiggling badly." "It is all up with me," he told another.

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"The Upturned Face" was an understandable choice from a dying writer—a burial tale. And a burial tale set in a war, bringing the author of *The Red Badge of Courage* full circle. But Crane's obsession—if that is the right word for it—with death and disfigurement, his predilection for fires and fire imagery—had informed much of his work. The imagery ran through his stories, novels, and reporting pieces like certain glittering threads in a tapestry. They were typically associated with war—the upturned faces of dead and mangled soldiers, men with staring, "liquid-like eyes," and "corpse-hued" skin, a landscape filled with burning flowers, campfires that looked like red eyes; demons, fire imps, crimson oaths, and roars.

Writing a war tale after his stint as a correspondent in the Spanish-American War, Crane described an encounter with "a red-headed Spanish corpse. I wonder how many hundreds were cognizant of this red-headed Spanish corpse?" he wrote in the piece "War Memories." "It arose to the dignity of a landmark. There were many corpses, but only one with a red head. This red head. He was always there. Each time I approached that part of the field I prayed that I might find that he had been buried. But he was always there—red headed." (The refrain echoed an explanation that Crane had once given to a reporter who wanted to know why he had testified against a New York City police officer on behalf of a prostitute, Dora Clark, whom Crane had seen wrongly accused of soliciting. "'Why,' he said, 'she was really handsome, you know, and she had hair—red hair—dark red.'")

Crane's great fire story is his 1897 novella, *The Monster.* A tale about the social ostracism of an unspeakably disfigured man and the doctor who saved his life, *The Monster,* at its deepest level, works on us as "The Upturned Face" does, addressing the human fear of death and bodily decay. Henry Johnson, an attractive young black hostler who works for a Dr. Trescott in upstate New York, saves the life of Trescott's young son, Jimmie, in a house fire, while the doctor is away. Dr. Trescott then does all he can to save Henry, who has been burned nearly to death. Against all odds, Henry lives—but as a monster, his face literally burned away. At first, the fictional town of Whilomville makes Henry a hero for saving the life of a child; then, when he doesn't die as expected, he is shunned, and the doctor finds himself without patients, and his wife is snubbed by the local ladies. The story ends with Dr. Trescott bleakly counting his wife's unused teacups on her "at home" day.

"He now had no face"—this is how Crane describes Henry Johnson's injuries. "It was simply a thing, a dreadful thing," he writes, refraining from graphic description. We watch as people run from

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the monster in horror—as an obese black woman scales a fence in terror; as a little girl, catching sight of him at a window during her birthday party (a wickedly comic bogeyman scene), suffers a nervous collapse—and we listen in on the townspeople's conversations. ("They say he is the most terrible thing in the world. Young Johnnie Bernard—that drives the grocery wagon—saw him up at Alex Williams's shanty, and he says he couldn't eat anything for two days.") We are left to imagine what the monster looks like and the horror is the more terrible because of Crane's restraint.

For me, reading *The Monster* was profoundly unnerving. I myself survived a fire in childhood. I was rescued, as Jimmie Trescott was, though far less dramatically, and escaped physical injury. But my twenty-nine-year-old father—who had tried to save me, and failed—was burned to death. For many years I was haunted by the image of what my handsome young father must have looked like after the fire—particularly by what had happened to his face. In my dreams he would appear as a bandaged figure, mummy-like; or he would be standing with his back to me, or sitting in a black-dark room. Henry Johnson sits impassively and alone on a box behind the Trescott's stable, his shoulders hunched, his head "swathed" in a "heavy crepe veil," Crane writes. Even the touching illustration that accompanied the story in its *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* publication in 1898—showing Henry Johnson sitting quietly in the shadow of the stable, his hands lying flat on his knees, his head draped in a long black cloth—evoked my dream father. As in Crane's story, my father had no face. Crane had written my nightmare.

Instead of a writing table illuminated by a large Victorian lamp with an incongruous taffeta shade, imagine a young girl's dresser, painted white. On top of it is a poodle lamp with a frilly shade, of the kind popular in the 1950s. And instead of East Sussex, in Victorian England, we are in Fort Rucker, Alabama, 1961.

It is a warm afternoon in early March, and a small group of children has gathered on a dirt hill overlooking the charred husk of a house, an A-frame, wood-and-brick ranch that had burned down three days earlier. From the air, the houses on this street all look the same, like the cutouts children make from a single, folded sheet of paper. The children on the hill can see that the burnt house's roof has collapsed, leaving an enormous hole in the center, like a gigantic donut.

At twilight, the house will be patrolled by a guard, the white MP band on his helmet the only source of light in the immense darkness. Now, in daylight, it is simply roped off to warn people away, but the

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children keep to the hill, way beyond the rope, as though the debris is radioactive.

From the little hill you can see that a part of the bearing wall along the back of the house has crumbled, exposing a child's bedroom. The unmade twin bed is on the right, opposite the door; the half-opened closet reveals a neat row of girls' dresses, the color of ashes. Everything in the room is shadowed, as though an unseen hand has smudged the picture with a charcoal pencil.

On the bare hill, the children sniff the still, summery air and catch a thin smoky wavelet, or think they do. In solemn tones, they discuss the fire—what caused it and who died there, though none of them knew the residents of the house or has ever been there to play. One of them—a boy, I think—says that the little girl who lived there died in the fire.

I am standing a couple of yards away, in borrowed clothes and shoes. From where I stand I can see my dresses still hanging in the closet and all my other things—all there for the taking, but I can't go in and get them.

I was eight years old. That memory has stayed with me for thirty-four years.

Until the day of the fire—March 5, 1961—I lived in that house in Fort Rucker with my father and mother, my seven-year-old brother, Johnny, and our dog, a boxer named Bama. My father was a career army pilot, in flight school at Fort Rucker. We had been stationed there for a year or so.

The fire broke out in the middle of the night, following a party my parents had given. Apparently, Bama—who usually slept in my parents' room but had been kept out that night so that they could sleep in the next morning—barked, from somewhere in the house. The last party guests had not left until around 3:30 in the morning, and my parents had not been in bed more than a half hour or so. My father had fallen into a deep sleep. My mother woke up first, apparently awakened by the dog's barking, and she had the odd sensation that someone was watching her—as though she was in a crowded room and someone was staring at her. Then she saw smoke pouring through the crack at the top of her closed bedroom door. Without waking my father, she flew out of bed, flung open the door, and ran through the smoke-filled hall into Johnny's room, which was catercorner to hers and Dad's, at the end of the hall.

My room was farther down, next to the den, and when my mother ran back to her room with my brother in her arms, she could see flames right next to my door and could hear me calling for her and

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my father. The windows were covered with heavy metal fasteners that had to be removed with tools—not the ordinary screens—but my mother's adrenaline was working, and she ripped the screen off her bedroom window and lifted Johnny out to the ground below. She told him to run across the street, wake the neighbors, and stay there—he was not to come back to our house. Then she woke my father.

I have a dim memory of one of my parents, I don't know which one, calling out to me from beyond my closed bedroom door and telling me to stay there and not to open the door—my father was coming to get me. I was so frightened I couldn't have opened the door, anyway; I could barely move.

The first thing I recall about the fire itself is waking up and smelling smoke. I was paralyzed with fear, and it seemed to take hours to get my body to move from a lying to a sitting position. When I finally did move, it was in slow motion, and noiselessly, as though the fire might hear me. I could see the dark gray crack at the bottom of my closed bedroom door, directly opposite the foot of my bed, where the smoke was coming in. I sat upright for what seemed like forever, staring at the crack under the door and waiting for my father to come in.

Directly to my left, no more than three feet from my head, was the open window. I thought how easy it would be, how quick—a lifting of the bed covers, one step onto the floor, then three more steps across the room to raise the window and climb out. But the window might as well have been in China. I could not will my legs to move any more than if I were crippled. I knew that it was no use—I would have to wait for my father to get me out. I waited.

The next thing I remember is a man's arm reaching in through my bedroom window, straining toward me, and a voice calling me by my name and telling me to grab onto his hand. The man was Captain Dale Harbert, who lived across the street from us. He told me to keep my head down below the smoke, but I don't remember him saying that, and I don't even recall seeing any smoke, although by then it was so thick in my room, my mother was later told, that, if I'd been rescued just a couple of minutes later, it would have been too late. I must have been coughing, but I don't remember that, either. All I remember is the smell. As Captain Harbert pulled me to safety, I scraped my knee on our picnic table, which was pushed against the house, under my window. In one of my hands, I clutched a tiny good-luck doll that I always slept with under my pillow.

I was taken to the Harberts' and placed in one of their daughters' bedrooms. Their living room was soon turned into a headquarters by the firemen, and there was a lot of talk that Mrs. Harbert evidently did not want me to hear. My mother and brother were across the

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street from me, at the home of our next-door neighbors, the Boyles. It was Mrs. Jo Harbert—a young, extremely kind, motherly woman—who had the task of telling me that my father had been killed. My mother had asked her to tell me. I had repressed all memory of this scene, but a few years ago, Mrs. Harbert told me about it. She had come into the bedroom where I was waiting, bringing her two daughters with her, and found me worrying about my dog and wondering where she was. When Mrs. Harbert told me that my father had died in the fire, and so had Bama, the color left my face, and my expression changed completely, so that it seemed she was looking at another child's face and not mine at all.

"Not my *father*," I said.

Later, I learned that when my mother woke my father to tell him that the house was on fire and that I was still in my room, he had tried to get down the hall to me, but the smoke was too thick. He and my mother then went into the little bathroom adjoining their bedroom and water-soaked bath towels to cover his head. He was wearing nothing but shorts and wet towels draped over his face and head when he disappeared into the hall.

The men who came through my parents' open bedroom window and tried to get down that same hall a few minutes later—Captain Harbert and Lieutenant Boyle—found an inferno. They could not take more than a step or two before they were driven back into my parents' bedroom. The fire department had been called, and called again, but was nowhere in sight. One of the neighbors who was standing out on the sidewalk found a fire alarm on the street, but when he pulled it, he found that it was disconnected. Even General Easterbrook was there before the firemen arrived, some thirty minutes after the first call, although the base fire department was located only about a minute away. The firemen had gotten lost finding their way to the house. To get inside, they had to break down the front door with axes; they proved so incompetent—fumbling with their oxygen masks, which they had never used before, fumbling with the axes—that Captain Harbert, the gentlest of men, finally grabbed an ax from one of them and said, "Let *me* do it."

My father's body was found in the den, right next to my bedroom, which means that as I was sitting up in my bed, watching the door and waiting for the knob to turn, he had bypassed my room as he groped his way down the hall and had gone in the den instead. He evidently ran into the table where the telephone was, because an operator later said that she took a call from a man reporting a fire but he was cut off. He was found under a ceiling beam that must have

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fallen on him as he was calling for help. Bama's body was found a few feet away from his.

Two important things happened before the fire that help to explain the nature and the length of my crushing grief afterward, though what role these events played in my obsession with my father's disfigurement, I do not know.

The first happened a few days before the fire. A young girlfriend of mine, I no longer remember who, said or did something that hurt my feelings, and I began to turn her unkindness in on myself by imagining that something bad would happen to me, and then wouldn't she be sorry. I imagined that my mother or father would die. I felt very guilty for thinking such a terrible thing, but I had thought it, and I couldn't take it back.

The second event occurred on the night of the fire. My parents' party was in full swing when the time came for Johnny and me to go to bed. I was making the rounds of the company, saying good night to everyone, when my father, an incorrigible tease, kidded me in a way that I didn't think was funny. (I had no sense of humor as a child and was—as both stories illustrate—painfully thin-skinned.) He stood in the living room laughing at me, waiting for his good-night kiss. I, in a great huff, made a point of kissing one of his officer friends good night and then sailed right past him to bed. This was the last time I ever saw him.

The result of both the fantasy and the behavior—acting on the mind of an eight-year-old girl who was deeply attached to her father—was, of course, overwhelming guilt: the feeling that I had somehow willed or caused my father's death and that I was therefore being punished.

After the fire, I stood across the street and watched with the Harbert family from their carport as the covered stretcher bearing my father's body was removed from the house. And I remember wondering how that narrow cargo could be my big father. How could he fit on that thing? And shouldn't there be a second stretcher for Bama?

I do not know to what extent seeing all that was left of my father—and yet not seeing, because he was covered up—contributed to the nightmares of the faceless man that continued for decades after the fire. But my conscious mind chose to remember seeing that stretcher, while it blocked all memory of the moment when Mrs. Harbert told me that my father was dead. There was a connection missed, something left unfinished; a kiss offered and declined. For years I relived that moment on the night before the fire, the last time I saw my father, and wished that I could rewrite it. If I'd gone to him then and held on to him, would the fire not have occurred? Could I have saved

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him? I didn't think that far. All I knew was that I wanted to fix what was broken.

It was not until I had committed myself to a biography of Stephen Crane and had begun the research in earnest that I knew much about him. Crane was obsessed with fire and disfigurement, fear and courage, and he longed for military honors. Owing to this desire, he had attended a semi-military academy near the Hudson River in New York, his sights set on West Point. (Crane's brother, William, persuaded him to pursue another course, since he believed that there would be no war in his lifetime.) Crane had wanted to be the kind of war hero my own father had been in the Korean War, from which he took away two Purple Hearts and the Bronze and Silver Stars. Stephen Crane was twenty-eight when he died; my father was twenty-nine. They both died on the fifth of a month and were strikingly similar in looks, possessing the same arched brows and similarly shaped large eyes and prominent noses. Both were ladies' men. Their personalities were similar, as well; they both had a great sense of fun. Crane attended Syracuse University; I received my B.A. degree from Syracuse. Crane was eight years old when his father died suddenly—the same age I was when my father died. My great-grandfather, an old-time Methodist minister who preached in the same area of New Jersey as Crane's father did, raised my grandmother on the evils of dancing and drinking, as the Reverend Jonathan Townley Crane had raised Stephen. When I was at the Newark Public Library looking at its Crane collection one year, I came across a letter from the journalist and Lincoln biographer, Ida Tarbell, saying that she had known Crane only slightly. (This was in response to a query.) Shortly after my return home, I discovered two photographs of Ida Tarbell in an antique photo album that had belonged to my maternal grandmother—one of Ida Tarbell alone and one of Ida with my great-grandfather. "The Upturned Face" was published in *Ainslee's Magazine* on March 5, 1900—sixty-one years *exactly* before the fire that killed my father. The coincidences continued to turn up—or were they coincidences? The deeper I dug into Crane, the more I found myself.

Stephen Crane also knew something about punishment. He never lived through a real fire, but he seems to have suffered from his upbringing in a way that contributed to the images of fire and disfigured bodies that haunted him, and his writing, later on.

The fourteenth child of a Methodist minister and a member of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Crane had been reared, from the cradle, on fanatically religious teachings—on fire-and-brimstone rantings about hell and eternal damnation—that seem to have

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left the bright, deeply sensitive child frightened and emotionally scarred.

Although Stephen Crane early rejected the family religion, it was in him. The fire scene in *The Monster* in which Henry Johnson is defaced is rendered as a stunning seduction scene with biblical overtones. In Dr. Trescott's laboratory, which is on the ground floor of his home, chemicals have exploded, transforming the room into a kind of hellish Eden, "like a garden in the region where might be burning flowers." In the midst of this fire garden, Henry Johnson, who is carrying young Jimmie Trescott in his arms, encounters "a delicate, trembling sapphire shape like a fairy lady. With a quiet smile she blocked his path and doomed him and Jimmie. Johnson shrieked, and then ducked in the manner of his race in fights. He aimed to pass under the left guard of the sapphire lady. But she was swifter than eagles, and her talons caught in him as he plunged past her." Johnson is knocked down on his back, at the bottom of the doctor's desk. Chemicals in glass jars are shattering on the desk, and one of them contains a red liquid, a serpent in the garden, "a ruby-red snake like thing" which oozes across the desk and down it, and consumes Henry's face. This, too, is carried out as a seductive dance.

> It coiled and hesitated, and then began to swim a languorous way down the mahogany slant. At the angle it waved its sizzling molten head to and fro over the closed eyes of the man beneath it. Then, in a moment, with mystic impulse, it moved again, and the red snake flowed directly down into Johnson's upturned face.

In Stephen Crane's rich and highly original imagination, the religious rantings he had heard as a child—with their terrifying images of the lake of fire, for instance—seem to have been transfigured, to reappear in his fiction and poetry as black riders, galloping out of the sea; as upturned faces on a battlefield; as men who lose their battle with the fire god. He couldn't get it out of his head. A fifteen-hundred-word story he wrote based on a dream he had at Brede Place, called "Manacled," tells of an actor performing in a play with real handcuffs on his wrists and ankles, when a fire breaks out in the theater. Everyone—both audience and cast—flees, forgetting the manacled actor on the stage, who can take steps of only four inches, one at a time. He is left to struggle off the stage and down its back stairs in his cuffs, where Crane leaves him doomed and alone to die in the fire. (Significantly, Crane dreamed the dream and wrote the story in the midst of his own slow decline from tuberculosis.) He seems to have invented a fire for an early reporting piece called "The Fire," in which he tried out some of the images he would use to greater effect in *The Monster.* And in a later story called "The Veteran,"

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Henry Fleming, the reluctant hero of *The Red Badge of Courage*, is resurrected. Now an old man, Henry dies in a fire while rescuing some colts from a burning barn.

As a writer, Stephen Crane was a shameless recycler, using the same words and images again and again, often until he had reached the best revision, or the culmination of what he'd been saying, or trying to say, in other work. The germ of "The Upturned Face," for instance, was first sketched in one of Crane's Cuban War tales, "The Price of the Harness":

> "Cover his face," said Grierson in a low and husky voice, afterward.
>
> "What'll I cover it with?" said Watkins.
>
> They looked at themselves. They stood in their shirts, trousers, leggings, shoes; they had nothing.
>
> "Oh," said Grierson, "here's his hat." He brought it and laid it on the face of the dead man. They stood for a time. It was apparent that they thought it essential and decent to say or do something. Finally Watkins said in a broken voice, "Aw, it's a damn shame." They moved slowly off the firing line.

In "The Upturned Face," the burial team recites what they can remember from the Spitzbergen burial service.

The Monster is a devastating and masterful crystallization of all Crane had been working up about fire and disfigurement; everything he'd written on these themes until then seems to have been in preparation for this short, great work. On its simplest level, *The Monster* is about alienation, the isolation of the dispossessed character in a society that rejects him. Like the writer in society, Henry Johnson starts life as someone different—a Negro. And then his singular act of courage is rewarded with more rejection, and, ultimately, with banishment, as Crane's personal courage, in writing and living according to his own beliefs, had forced him into permanent exile. *The Monster*, located in fictive Whilomville (based on Crane's childhood town of Port Jervis, New York), was written while Crane was living in England with a woman who was not his wife and feeling that he could not go home again with this pretend wife. Cora Crane, née Taylor, still legally married to a British officer, was well known to American journalists as the former proprietess of a Jacksonville, Florida, "sporting house," the Hotel de Dream, where Crane had met her.

After Stephen Crane experienced war firsthand as a journalist in Greece for the Hearst newspapers and in Cuba for Pulitzer's *New York World*, after he had seen friends and strangers lying shot and dead on the battlefield, "he could not shake an obsessive imagining of what it must be like to be hit at this or that point of the body," writes the

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distinguished Crane scholar J. C. Levenson. And it is true that Crane's war tales and war reporting are littered with corpses, wounded men, upturned faces, and staring eyes, the distinctive Crane imagery and view exploring again and again "the awful majesty of a man shot in the face." Writing about a sergeant signaling under fire at Guantánamo Bay during the Spanish-American War, Crane lays bare his obsession: "It seemed absurd to hope that he would not be hit; I only hoped that he would be hit just a little, little, in the arm, the shoulder, or the leg."

For all Crane's irritation at editors wanting him to write about war, war, war—war, with its crimson color, fascinated him. And it was red: the bloody bandages, "the terrible red of the man's face, which was of the quality of flame as it appears in old pictures"; a red fez on a Turkish soldier. And yet Crane's obsession with disfigurement and death had been part of him long before he saw war.

Early in *The Red Badge of Courage*, young Henry Fleming—a "youth," like Crane (who was twenty-one and twenty-two when he wrote the war novel), and who, like his creator, "[tries] to observe everything"—comes across a dead soldier in the woods. While the rest of the ranks move around the corpse to avoid it, Fleming is captivated by it.

> The youth looked keenly at the ashen face. The wind raised the tawny beard. It moved as if a hand were stroking it. He vaguely desired to walk around and around the body and stare; the impulse of the living to try to read in dead eyes the answer to the Question.

Was this the actual source of Crane's preoccupation with death and disfigurement, or the deeper source: his nagging worry about what the dead know, that only the dead have been to "the undiscovered country," which unhealthy Crane, throughout his short life, had felt to be close at hand? Stephen Crane had been a sickly child, a tubercular adult who sensed that he wouldn't live long. (It is noteworthy that the corpse Fleming sees has a "tawny" beard—Crane's own hair color. And, as Michael Fried has noted, as if to underscore further the writer's identification with the corpse, Crane writes that the soles of the dead man's shoes "had been worn to the thinness of writing paper.")

Death and disease had been frequent visitors to the heavily populated Crane household, marking young Stephen—the last of the Reverend and Mrs. Crane's staggering brood—in ways we can only guess at, since Crane left no record of his own feelings about it. Five of his brothers and sisters had died before he was born. His father died suddenly when Stephen was eight; his beloved sister Agnes—the sib-

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ling most like him, who was also his first literary mentor and his surrogate mother—died when he was twelve. His brother Luther was killed in a gruesome accident when Stephen was fourteen. (A flagman for the Erie Railroad, cheerful, twenty-three-year-old Luther fell in front of an oncoming train. His left arm and leg were mutilated, two fingers were severed, and he died of shock—not instantly but almost twenty-four hours later, a death that raises additional questions about Crane's interest in disfigurement.) Stephen's mother, to whom he was close, died after his one semester at Syracuse, his last fling with college, when he was twenty. Other family members had died as well: a sister-in-law (of Bright's disease), a niece, and a nephew. And Stephen wrote about corpses.

Stephen Crane made his name on a book about fear and its companion, courage. As a man, he was always testing these words—wading deep into New Jersey's Raritan River as a little boy before he had learned to swim, gasping as he started to go under, but keeping at it until a brother pulled him out; pulling a loaded revolver on a group of hazing fraternity boys at Lafayette College and then fainting; taking on the New York police force and its commissioner Theodore Roosevelt by testifying in court on behalf of Dora Clark; calmly rolling a cigarette while bullets ripped the air around him in Cuba. He smoked heavily, ate poorly, and generally neglected his health. He challenged Fate.

Stephen Crane died young and troubled, overwhelmed with debt and increasingly forced to turn to hackwork to stay one step ahead of his creditors, living in exile in England with a woman he tried to pass off as his wife. Cora Crane was not, the evidence suggests, the love of Crane's life, but she adored him, and he seems to have found a kind of married contentment with her. His demons never left him; he was too young, he hadn't had time enough to make peace with them, to grow up.

That his mind was tormented as he lay dying of tuberculosis at the Villa Eberhardt in Badenweiler, Germany, is heartbreakingly chronicled by Cora Crane in a letter she wrote: "My husbands [*sic*] brain is never at rest. He lives over everything in dreams & talks aloud constantly. It is too awful to hear him try to change places in the 'open boat'!" Crane hadn't had time enough to fix what was broken—to the extent that the traumas of childhood can ever be fixed. At the end of "The Upturned Face," the burial team finds that it has forgotten to turn the dead soldier's body over. The last thing to be covered with dirt is the face.

Even after the nightmares of my father stopped, after I had had time and help in fixing what was broken, there was no dream resolu-

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tion: I never saw the horror of his hidden face. But about a year ago, as I started to write my biography of Stephen Crane, I had another dream, only this time it was a waking dream—a flashback. I was in the kitchen of the ranch house in Fort Rucker, and my father was standing at the counter with his back to me, making one of his special pizzas from a Chef Boyardee mix and adding the pepperoni he'd bought from the butcher. Suddenly he began to turn around—he was saying something to me—and from the perspective of an eight-year-old child looking *up* at an adult, I saw his face. He was smiling, that wide-grinned smile composed of straight, very white teeth, and his face was young, unlined and handsome.

Samuel Lipman

1934–1994

Contributor, THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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Karl Mannheim

EDWARD SHILS

I FIRST ENCOUNTERED THE NAME OF KARL MANNHEIM in the late 1920s in the course of browsing through the journal of my intellectual promised land, the *Archiv für Sozialwissenschaft und Sozialpolitik*, edited for much of its existence by Max Weber, with the collaboration of Werner Sombart, Joseph Schumpeter, and others. It was the organ of the promised land which I yearned for but could not enter. My German was not good enough for that, but the resounding German nouns made me certain that that was where intellectual redemption was to be obtained. What promises were contained in such titles as "*Das Problem einer Soziologie des Wissens*" ("The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge"), "*Das konservative Denken*" ("Conservative Thought"), "*Der Historismus*," ("Historicism"), "*Über das Wesen und die Bedeutung des wirtschaftlichen Erfolgsstrebens*" ("Concerning the Nature and the Significance of Striving for Economic Success"), and so on. I knew vaguely what the nouns meant; I could occasionally decipher a whole sentence but not readily. At home in the evenings, I was trying to read Max Weber's posthumous *Wirtschaftsgeschichte* (*Economic History*) and the first volume of Sombart's *Der moderne Kapitalismus*. I read them word for word, looking up most words in the Muret Saunders dictionary, which I had bought a little while earlier for $2.50 from the bookseller George Allen's parents and which I still possess after seventy-five years, the worn-out relic of my repeatedly looking up the same words over and over again.

I was ignorant but not so ignorant as to think that Karl Mannheim, despite the melodramatic intellectual grandeur of his titles, took intellectual precedence over Weber and Sombart. It was while I was still an undergraduate that Mannheim's *Ideologie und Utopie* appeared, and I was dimly aware of the great commotion which it set going in Germany. (I learned about this from Mannheim's essay in "*Wissenssoziologie*" in Vierkandt's *Handwörterbuch der Soziologie*.)

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In the spring of 1931, Karl Mannheim was a terra incognita to me. Mannheim did not enter into my thoughts for most of the next year, 1931–32, which I spent in New York as a student in a social work agency. That year was spent in delighted discovery of the scintillating insights of Georg Simmel, helpless pondering on Dilthey's *Einleitung* (*Introduction*), and in the salt-mine-like labor in reading word for word Weber's *Das antike Judentum (Ancient Judaism)*, which caused me to have to look up almost every word. Gradually things improved. I was able to read much of Rilke's *Die Aufzeichnungen des Malte Laurids Brigge (The Notebooks of Malte Laurids Brigge)* in German with some reasonable understanding.

After my year as a student-trainee in social work in New York, I was persuaded by my good friend Sidney Sufrin to go to the University of Chicago. He enticed me by his accounts of the economist Frank Knight's somber and unremitting search for truth. I was also attracted, on my own, by Robert Park and the Chicago school of urban sociology. So I went to Chicago in September 1932. There, shortly after my arrival, I presented myself to Louis Wirth. I had already known of Wirth through his article on Tönnies of about 1927 and by his bibliography on urban sociology appended to *The City*, edited by Park and Ernest Burgess, which showed a considerable familiarity with the German literature on cities.

Wirth told me that he had just returned from a year in Germany—it was 1932, the last year in which such a thing was still possible for a civilized man. He asked me whether I had ever heard of Karl Mannheim. I confessed, with a mixture of embarrassment and pride, that I had indeed heard a lot about him, adding that he was an author with whom I had to become very familiar, though up to then I had read nothing written by him. Wirth told me that he had become acquainted with Mannheim in Frankfurt and had many conversations with him. He was obviously taken by Mannheim, particularly by Mannheim's assertion of his interest in learning about American sociology. Indeed, that was already evident in Mannheim's inaugural lecture at Frankfurt on *"Die Gegenwartsaufgaben der Soziologie"* ("The Present-Day Tasks of Sociology") in which he referred to the American sociologist W. I. Thomas's *The Polish Peasant.* Mannheim clearly desired an appreciative audience in the United States. This desire must itself have been to a large extent a precipitate of Wirth's visit. I think that before Wirth's visit, Mannheim never mentioned the United States or any American social scientist in any of his writings.

That winter, while I was still a social worker, I finally read *Ideologie und Utopie.* I was swept off my intellectual underpinnings by its daringly grandiose ambition. I was not entirely persuaded by the idea of

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the dependence of the attainment of objectivity in social science by the intellectual interchanges of a heterogeneous intelligentsia, free from "class interests." In the spring of that year, I read Mannheim's essay *"Wissenssoziologie"* in Vierkandt's *Handwörterbuch.* After the melodramatic terms of *Ideologie und Utopie,* it was a comedown. I was furthermore troubled—though fascinated nevertheless—by his furtive suggestions about the penetration of the processes of the genesis of a proposition into its validity. I was not persuaded, but my skepticism was rather faint in comparison with the impression the essay made on me. I had not yet read Max Weber's methodological writings, which would have been a prophylactic against such views.

I had not yet gone deeply enough into Max Weber's substantive propositions, only into his earth- and epoch-embracing categories in the first chapter of *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft (Economy and Society).* But Mannheim had startling interpretations of historical events. His set of correlations between "conceptions of time" and political attitudes seemed very exciting, although it did appear, even then, to be slightly slapdash in its lack of factual particulars. I found its classification of types of time not quite satisfying.

I have failed to say that one of my reasons for my fascination with Mannheim was the fact that he dealt with intellectuals, a subject I was keenly interested in. I had spent several undergraduate years studying French (and English) literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Flaubert was at the center of my interest. I took it as my task to understand why Flaubert hated his country and his fellow countrymen as passionately as he did. The French poets of the latter part of the nineteenth century turned their backs on their country. It was becoming the same in Great Britain, with Wilde, Shaw, Wells, et al; and in the United States, we had not only the self-exile of our greatest writer, Henry James, and the withdrawal from mainstream life of Herman Melville but also, later, the flood of intellectual exiles to Paris in the 1920s.

I thought that Mannheim could help me to understand this, though he never made any reference to such things in his writings. He was probably ignorant of them. Still, I thought I would gain help in these matters from a writer who wrote so confidently about intellectuals as the linchpins of society. Nonetheless, with all my underconfident hesitations, in the winter of 1932–33 I became an exhilarated devotee of Mannheim.

In the spring of 1933, leaving the Goodman Theater after a large demonstrative meeting of social workers, I saw Louis Wirth, whose wife was one of Chicago's leading social workers. He greeted me with an amicable acknowledgment of my existence; during the winter

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term, I had attended his 8:00 A.M. class on the history of German sociology several mornings each week. (I do not believe that the course dealt with any of the epoch-spanning views of Mannheim, Weber, Simmel, etc. It was based mostly on the three little volumes of *Soziologische Lesestücke*, edited by Franz Oppenheimer and Gottfried Salomon. Wirth used to read the crucial passages in the original German. I was the only student in the class who more or less knew German. I had, moreover, the texts in front of me. Wirth commented on the passages, often very thoughtfully. He did not allude to Mannheim in that course.

That evening at the Goodman Theater, Wirth told me that he would like me to call on him when it was convenient for me. I made it convenient for myself with a minimum of delay. When we met, he told me briefly that he had received funds—rather exiguous funds—to support the employment of a research assistant for a year on a project designated as "the presupposition of modern German sociology." The salary was to be $86.11 per month. I was at the time earning $125.00 per month as a family caseworker for the Cook County Bureau of Public Welfare. It was, I should emphasize, a fascinating post from which I have benefited for the rest of my life. Nevertheless, I did not hesitate for a moment. I told Wirth that I gladly and gratefully accepted his invitation to be his assistant. I felt myself elevated into the intellectual empyrean.

II

Wirth's project was not well thought out. It seems to have been inspired by Mannheim's discussion of the "*Standortsgebundenheit des Wissens*" ("Situational Dependence of Knowledge"), Spranger's lecture before the Akademie der Wissenschaften in Berlin about "the so-called presuppositionlessness of science" and, rather remotely, Max Weber's two essays on *"Wertfreiheit"* and *"Objektivität."* It was apparently also influenced by Cooley's "Nature of Social Knowledge" and some of Robert Park's writings and ruminations. One of its main issues was whether sociology was a science of the mind or a natural science, whether it was or could be a genuine empirical science or a science of the mind, whether it was a normative or an ideographic science. It presented no list of definite topics on which I should work or any list of books which I should read.

Once I began to work on the project, I repeatedly applied to Wirth to obtain clarification about his intention and clearer instruction for my own proceeding. It was all in vain; Wirth was always so busy and, when we did find time to speak, he could only tell me once more that

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he was interested in "the presuppositions" of social science. Nevertheless, I did not sit by waiting for more stringent instruction. I began in earnest to study Max Weber's writings. As might be expected, I studied the *Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Wissenschaftslehre (Collected Essays on Methodology)* until their pips squeaked. I also read Rickert, some Dilthey, whose works, despite my fantasies about what they contained, I found fairly impenetrable, Eduard Spranger, Erich Becher, Gustav Schmoller, Ferdinand Tönnies, Werner Sombart, Carl Menger, Ludwig Mises, Otto Bauer, Max Adler. I even read the horrible Horkheimer. I acquired an intimate knowledge of German social thought of the late-nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth centuries.

I read all the literature produced by the Germans in exile. I even read a little bit of the German social scientists who espoused—at least, at first—the Nazi cause. I refer here particularly to Hans Freyer, a writer from whom I learned a good deal despite his Nazi sympathies. I became a close friend of Alexander von Schelting, who had very different political views and had been the managing editor of the *Archiv* for most of its last decade; von Schelting was the most subtle and rigorous expositor of Max Weber's methodological writings.

In the course of all this, I naturally became friendly with the refugees from the Nazi regime. Hans Speier was perhaps the one to whom I was closest. My relationship with him dates from 1934, when I first wrote to him about his unpublished manuscript on *Die Angestellte in der deutschen Gesellschaft* ("The White-Collar Worker in German Society")—until he became so deeply enmeshed in the Rand Corporation in the 1960s that our paths separated. The fact that he had written his dissertation at Heidelberg under Mannheim's inspiration and supervision and his having been the emissary of the Graduate Faculty to Mannheim in Amsterdam in 1933 or 1934, to persuade him to come to the United States, brought us closer together. We were also separated by his rightly critical attitude towards Mannheim's commitment to the proposition of the *Standortsgebundenheit des Wissens* ("Situational Dependence of Knowledge"). I owe my discovery of the different behavior, the independent role of intellectual traditions and institutions, and the external (situational) determination of the content of thought to some of Speier's and my discussions about Mannheim's ultimately ambivalent and indecisive attitude.

All these personal associations and my becoming at home in the German academic world were a great benefit to me. But they were mostly peripheral to the "presuppositions of social science" rather than at the heart of them. On the project proper—whatever it could have been—I made little clearly ascertainable progress. The project

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had, after all, not been conceived as a means of educating me. It was supposed to produce material which was to enable Louis Wirth, or Louis Wirth and me, to write a book. It began to become evident that this was not going to happen. He did get something. I wrote several long articles on other subjects which bore his name alone or both of our names, which enhanced his already high reputation for being a person who knew a lot about many diverse things.

The main thing that Wirth got was the translation of *Ideologie und Utopie* and an incompletely salvaged introduction to the English version of the book. That came about this way. Wirth told me that Mannheim was very eager to have *Ideologie und Utopie* translated into English. Wirth inquired very tentatively whether I would be willing to do the translation. Of course, I agreed. It was an honor to be thought so close to the pantheon and, furthermore, I was eager to escape from the embarrassed confusion resulting from the unfocused state of my work on the "presuppositions."

I began the translation in the spring of 1934 and had most of a first draft ready by the end of the same term. Then I revised it once myself. By the autumn of 1934, Wirth was in a lively correspondence with Mannheim, who was as fidgety, for no good reason, as a hen on a nest of woodpeckers. Much of the correspondence was, as I remember, fairly trivial, but it was evident that Mannheim was very concerned that his book should strike the right note in the United States. He wanted it to be interpreted as integral to the American tradition of social thought. In this Wirth encouraged him, repeatedly referring to John Dewey's *Human Nature and Conduct* as the American counterpart of *Ideologie und Utopie.*

Part of Mannheim's fidgetiness might have been attributed to his uncertainty about his status at the London School of Economics. Mannheim had first thought that his appointment was a permanent one, when it was in fact an appointment for a short time and was, I think, separately financed, outside the regular budget of the School.

I should add that Mannheim was sensitive to the fact that he was not a professor but only a "lecturer." Many German exiles suffered from sensitivities of rank in the relatively loosely stratified structure of Anglo-American universities. It was not solely that he did not enjoy the title of professor that he had enjoyed in Germany. There was a more substantial ground for his unhappiness at the LSE. Professor Morris Ginsberg, in accordance with the traditional right of the head of the department, delivered the course of introductory lectures, attendance at which was obligatory for all students. Mannheim had given the corresponding course in Frankfurt, which was immensely popular. He thought he was being deprived of this prerogative in

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London. At the LSE, his lectures were well and enthusiastically attended, above all by graduate students, Americans in particular.

I think also that Mannheim was attracted in a vague way by the possibility of making a career in the United States, as an alternative to his unsatisfactory situation in Great Britain. Leo Rosten was then an exceptional graduate student at Chicago, with a pretense to worldliness. Leo Rosten brought back golden tales of Mannheim's lectures, and he probably also, in his boastful way, suggested things to Mannheim about American social science that Mannheim wanted to hear.

In any case, Mannheim was frequently writing letters to Wirth about the translation that he had not yet seen and could not assess. First, the letters were only to Wirth, then he began to write to me, too, very deferentially, usually about very trivial points or none at all. Then one day, after the translation of the book was done, I received from Mannheim a long manuscript which he wished to have published as the introduction to *Ideologie und Utopie.* For me it was a thrilling composition of moral history, but I could not see how it could function as an introduction to a book which had as its central position a rather hesitant relativism and a desire to avoid the charges of relativism which his own assertions frequently justified. The introductory chapter—or essay—was a rather exciting piece of work, full of grandiose generalizations which in German had an especial resonance. In a tuned-down version, it is now available as the first chapter of *Ideology and Utopia.*

The revision of the translation was a very slow affair. Louis Wirth and I reconsidered every word—I think the translation was as faithful to Mannheim's ideas as any translation could be, and it was, moreover, in good grammatical English, free of jargon and Germanisms. Another reason why it was so slow was that Wirth insisted on keeping open the door to his room in which we worked and which led into the corridor so that any passerby could come in to exchange a few words with him. Wirth was very popular, and his wisdom and his friendly words were cherished.

Nevertheless, we finally got it done. Then came the task of preparing the introduction. Wirth prepared a draft which was so embarrassing to me by its fatuity and inconsequence that I gave serious thought to telling him that I decided not to have my name attached as co-translator to the published version of the English text. I undertook instead to revise Wirth's introduction. I think that I got rid of the most humiliatingly fatuous parts, but not entirely. When Mannheim saw the text of the poor, although improved, introduction, he wrote to Wirth to praise it as "*ein abgerundetes Kunstwerk,*" or a perfectly

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formed work of art. That struck me as a pathetic confession of dependence on someone who could contribute to making his reputation in Anglo-American intellectual life and particularly in America.

In the mid-1930s, I—with the possible exception of Robert Merton and a handful of German refugees in the social sciences—was the only person who had read Mannheim's sociological writings of the 1920s. Whatever my hesitations about Mannheim's "epistemology," I threw myself with unquenchable exhilaration into such essays as *"Das konservative Denken"* ("Conservative Thought"), *"Das Problem einer Soziologie des Wissens"* ("The Problem of a Sociology of Knowledge"), *"Der Historismus"* ("Historicism"), *"Über das Wesen und die Bedeutung des wirtschaftlichen Erfolgsstrebens"* ("Concerning the Nature and the Significance of Striving for Economic Success"), and *"Das Problem der Generationen"* ("The Problem of Generations"). I can now scarcely recall any of the specific propositions of those essays; such ideas as I do recall now seem to be largely truisms or impossibly vague. But at that time they were breathtaking observations.

So it was with Mannheim's *Mensch und Gesellschaft im Zeitalter des Umbaus (Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction)*. I received a copy one morning and spent most of the rest of the day and deep into the night reading it in a state of great excitation. I am not sure that Wirth ever read it; if he did, he probably disapproved of it, even though he was a convert to the belief in the superiority of a planned society over an unplanned one. Without discussing the matter with Wirth, I informed Mannheim that I was ready to translate the book. It was small, and after my experience on the earlier book, I foresaw it as a speedy job.

This, though, was not enough for Mannheim—he wanted a large following and beyond that a larger public. He wanted to be a great intellectual figure on the level of Kant. One of the reviewers of *Ideology and Utopia* suggested that the intellectual achievement of that work placed the author on the level of Kant. I think that Mannheim yearned for such a standing. Yet, except in the minds of a few eminent senior academic and ecclesiastical figures in Great Britain, he did not have it. What he did have was a very distinguished connection through the Moot, a group of eminent men interested in religion and society whose members included T. S. Eliot, John Middleton Murray, John Oldham, Alexander David Lindsay, Edward Hallett Carr, and others. He was the only Central European refugee who participated in such a circle. He was very proud of that set of connections, but it was still not enough. He wanted ardently to gain acceptance in his new environment.

Indeed, after about 1935, Mannheim renounced his rich historical

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sociology to apply his intellectual powers to the practical problems of contemporary society. His attention turned increasingly to education, and gradually he came into close connection with the Institute of Education of the University of London under the direction of Sir Fred Clarke, an admirable man who took very warmly to Mannheim. In a way, this was a continuation and extension of Mannheim's deep concern about the crisis of modern society, which for him was epitomized in the rise and accession to power of the National Socialists in Germany. He greatly overestimated the strength of related tendencies in other Western countries. Like many Central European refugees in Western Europe and the United States, he underestimated no less the ramshackle obduracy of such countries as Great Britain, France, the Netherlands, and the United States, in their tenacious devotion to liberal democratic traditions.

Mannheim made strenuous attempts at adaptation to his new British and his anticipated American environment. I think that he yearned to become a figure with a prominent place in public opinion such as he had been already in intellectual circles in the last years of the Weimar period in Germany. He wanted to be a man of wide public influence. His popularity as a teacher at the London School of Economics, great though it was, was not sufficient for him. He was very popular at the School in the first years after his arrival. The students were greatly taken by his leaping imagination, his spirited observations about the complexity of social stratification, his wide-ranging historical references, and his studious personal consideration. He attracted a devoted following, none of whom ever produced any work along his lines. (Norbert Elias, the only sociologist who drew extensively on Mannheim's ideas, was not really his pupil; he had already been Mannheim's assistant at Frankfurt.)

Mannheim's *Man and Society in an Age of Reconstruction* appeared in 1935. It must have been written for the most part after he came to England; some of it might have been written in the intermediate and brief period he spent in the Netherlands. Most of this small book was devoted to the "age of planning," about which there was already much talk, under direct and indirect Soviet influence, in Great Britain and even more in the United States, the overflow of which seeped into Great Britain. Mannheim's response was to change his explanation of the crisis of Western societies from the loss of objectivity of moral and cognitive standards, which made mutual understanding and consensus almost impossible to attain, to a new explanation of the cause of the crisis as the failure to reconcile the policy of laissez-faire with the policy of a comprehensively planned society that yet left room for freedom.

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My work on the translation of the new book produced a steady flow of letters from Mannheim. I sent him each chapter as it was put into reasonable and legible condition, and I added supplementary information and, above all, bibliographical references, particularly American bibliographical references. Meanwhile, he seems to have been hard at work in adapting the English-language edition to its anticipated Anglo-American—especially American—audience. The book appeared in this country in 1940, a thoroughly transformed work. It was about twice as long as the original text and was followed by an immense bibliography that contained items—many of them American—which he obviously had not read, since the title of the cited book was misread by Mannheim to refer to the subject of Mannheim's discussion in *Man and Society in the Age of Reconstruction.*

I contributed to a symposium organized around the book in *The Journal of Liberal Religion.* I tried to put the best face I could on my response to it, but evidently not quite successfully because Mannheim wrote to me in a slightly injured but still very friendly tone, saying that he hoped that we would soon be able to discuss our differences face-to-face. I was then making preparations for my journey to London, where I was to spend the next several years.

III

In the early autumn of 1942 I went to see Karl Mannheim in the flesh for the first time. I had telephoned him to inform him of my desire to see him, and he responded in a very welcoming way. I traveled to Golder's Green by the underground and walked up the hill to Mannheim's house, which was between the Hampstead and the Golder's Green tube stations. He occupied a small pretty little house in a close just backing on to Anna Pavlova's old house on the northern edge of the Heath.

Mannheim's servant admitted me and escorted me to his study. It was a moderate-sized room, lined with bookshelves from about three and a half feet to about seven feet from the ground. I glanced quickly at the books and recognized some of them by their binding—Meinecke, Simmel, and others, and, above all, Max Weber's works. *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (*Economy and Society*), bound into a single volume, seemed to have been assiduously studied to judge from the condition of the binding. On a large desk was a thick block of writing or drawing paper about twenty-four inches square. This was the paper on which Mannheim first sketched his ideas. The first appearance of an idea to Mannheim seems to have come with a "word" or a phrase. There were no sentences. Bit by bit, the scattered words and phrases,

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in no geometrically linear order, were transformed into sentences and paragraphs and then pages and chapters.

Sometimes in the midst of the scattered jottings and notations or in the margins of manuscripts, there would appear a charming drawing of an elephant, or a horse, or a dog. These little drawings were as fluently done as the final version of Mannheim's written manuscripts, which were done in a beautiful masterly German script such as was seldom seen in those days. German script had a few decades of elegance between the end of the hideous old script and present-day scratchings done with ball-point pens. Mannheim belonged to this epoch, not only in his script but in his general culture and his apprehensive solicitude about the fate of liberal European civilization.

Mannheim himself was a man of middle height—he was perhaps five feet, eight inches tall. He was broad-shouldered and stocky in general outline. His body looked stronger than his face indicated him to be. He had a pinkish, slightly tan complexion, soft-skinned but not puffy. He had a large bald dome, fringed with dark hair. His eyes smiled very affectionately, but he also appeared, as his first words to me indicated, rather uneasy. I had already noted this general demeanor of uneasiness in a photograph reproduced in one of his books published in the 1930s.

His first words, as I came into the room and shook hands, were, "What do they think of me in America?" That seemed to me a very odd question for a famous and distinguished scholar to ask of an utterly unknown and utterly undistinguished one. I did not tell him that, in fact, there was little thought about him in sociological circles in the United States, and what little there was, except for Wirth, was jealously unfriendly. Robert Lynd, for example—a mediocre, slightly leftist ex-clergyman—disliked Mannheim's insufficient sympathy with Marxism. Von Schelting's critical review of *Ideologie und Utopie* had been made scathing by the jealous, embittered Howard P. Becker, who was book-review editor of *The American Sociological Review.* Hans Speier's review in the *American Journal of Sociology* was more gentlemanly than the others and appreciative of Mannheim's many merits, but he did not conceal his disapproval of Mannheim's "epistemology."

I skirted around this query, speaking mostly of Louis Wirth's espousal of his cause. Then the conversation veered towards other topics—mostly about recent American sociological publications that might be congenial to Mannheim's efforts to turn his original German sociology of knowledge into an American social psychology in the style of John Dewey.

I saw Mannheim frequently over the next few years—at least once a month. He was always very kind to me, but I think that he was a little

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daunted by me. He thought perhaps that I was too critical of his efforts to establish comprehensive social planning as the right object of liberal-democratic policy. I read the manuscript of the book on democracy that he had written on commission from the Royal Institute of International Affairs and criticized its vagueness and its optimism. He took this criticism—at least in my presence—extremely amiably: slightly amused, very kind, yet to be sure not altogether pleased. He said that it was too late to change the manuscript because it had already gone to the publishers, but the next time he wrote a book, he promised to take my criticisms very much to heart. He would heed them and correct himself; he made it seem as if he were a schoolboy and I was his teacher. He used repeatedly to seek my recommendations on the sociological literature he should read. He seems to have thought that I knew a great deal, much more than I in fact did.

Most of our conversation—in the years between my arrival in England in 1942 and my departure, and then on my return to take up the post at the London School of Economics that he had resigned to become professor of education at the Institute of Education of the University of London—did not deal with the deeper questions of sociology. I would have benefited immensely from such discussions. But much of our conversation was given to his complaints about his situation at the London School of Economics, where he was engaged in an unpleasant and unceasing discord with Morris Ginsberg, the professor of sociology and head of the department. Mannheim held Ginsberg responsible for whatever misfortunes he thought he suffered. They were largely, as far as I could make out, about matters of dignity. His failure to become professor of sociology was very painful for him. There was a powerfully rooted convention in British universities for there to be only one professor for each subject; at the London School of Economics, the department of economics was the only department to have more than one—it had both Lionel Robbins and Friedrich Hayek—but from this Mannheim obtained no consolation. He also suffered from what he thought was the contempt of Hayek and Nicholas Kaldor.

Karl Popper's arrival at the School in the autumn of 1946 was also felt by Mannheim to be an injury. It was just a short while after the publication of Popper's *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, which contained the first of the essays on "The Poverty of Historicism." Mannheim was wounded by these essays, because, though they scarcely referred to him explicitly, Popper clearly had him in mind as their target. Mannheim also thought—rightly—that Hayek's *Road to Serfdom* was directed against him.

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As a result, Mannheim felt himself isolated at the LSE. Hayek and, by association, Robbins, and, by barely veiled intimations, Popper all seemed to be in cheerful collusion against him. Ginsberg's antagonism was not veiled. I do not think that they ever had any hard words, but the feeling that passed between them made it seem as if they had. So much did Mannheim bear the wounds of Ginsberg's utter and visible lack of sympathy that, when I arrived at Mannheim's home within an hour after learning of Mannheim's death, the first thing that Mrs. Mannheim said as she embraced me was, "Ginsberg killed him!"

In addition to all of this nerve-racking antagonism, Mannheim really was suffering from cardiac and pulmonary problems that aggravated each other. He led a hard life during the war. The London School of Economics had been evacuated to Cambridge throughout the war (the Ministry of Air had taken over its buildings in London). This meant that Mannheim, who would not consider a change of residence, spent about two nights each week at Westminster College, a Presbyterian theological college, which was not an integral part of the University. It must have been very cold and uncomfortable there—every place was cold in England during the winters of the war, and Mannheim found the journeys by rail between London and Cambridge difficult. They were in fact difficult for healthy younger persons like myself, who did not have to make the journey regularly. This burden was accompanied by another burden—namely, weekly journeys between Nottingham and London; the Institute of Education had, like the School of Economics, been required to give over its quarters to the Ministry of Information. As Mannheim's ties to the School of Economics were loosening because he felt so little at home there, they were becoming more tightly bound with Nottingham. But this had heavy physical costs.

Despite the severe strain on his health, Mannheim always found time to receive me. I never saw him outside his house except once when I heard him lecture at University College London. I was always given a fine dinner that, though sparse in quantity, was invariably delicious, being cooked by the devoted servant of the Mannheim's, Julia, a Hungarian woman who had been with the family for many years and who was deeply devoted to them. (In the end she inherited the house in which the family had lived.) There was always a bottle of fine wine at dinner, at a time when any kind of wine was difficult to obtain.

In addition to the excellent dinners, I was also indulged by the company Mannheim invited for my delectation. (I find it hard to think that he could have thought that I was equally as interesting to

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his guests.) The guests included Arthur Koestler; Arthur T. M. Wilson, colonel in the directorate of army psychiatry and one of the most brilliant men I ever met; and Edward Glover, who was at the forefront of psychoanalysis at the time. These guests were persons of exceptional talent and intelligence. Some of them became friends of mine for the rest of their lives, and many of them had a tremendous intellectual and professional influence on the subsequent course of my life.

In the early evening of January 7, 1947, I was in a taxi accompanying Michael Polanyi to King's Cross Station for his return journey to Manchester, where he was still professor of physical chemistry. Polanyi was a little older than Mannheim, but they were both members of the Galileo Society. They had known each other in Budapest. Although he was working in the Kaiser Wilhelm Institute for the study of man-made fibers, Polanyi was an intellectual highbrow, especially interested in social affairs. He was a liberal and a severe critic of social planning. He had very little sympathy with Mannheim—to the point of indifference—while Mannheim was very sensitive to "Michi's" lack of sympathy. When I said to Polanyi, as we were nearing the station, that Karl Mannheim had died, Polanyi made no reply at all. He was probably thinking of one of his philosophical conundrums and there was no clear category in his mind for Mannheim.

The emigration was an unmitigated catastrophe for Mannheim. He did not learn enough from his new environment as many refugees did, so that their transfer, however cruel, was not without some compensations. He learned no new techniques of research, as many scientists did; he did not come into rich traditions close enough to his own not to derail him. The tradition of Hobbes, Locke, Bentham, and John Stuart Mill was not close enough to Mannheim's own kind of liberalism to permit a moderately easy coming to rest in the new environment. There was no Anglo-American tradition of speculative historical sociology, no tradition of the history of ideas—despite many brilliant individual performances—to which he could attach himself. What Mannheim needed in England was the Warburg Institute, with its brilliant staff of European scholars, but at that time the Warburg Institute was undergoing the trauma of resettlement, and the removal of its marvelous library to London. Indeed, it was only by the time of Mannheim's death that Fritz Saxl, the director, was able to establish the Warburg Institute on a firm footing.

Mannheim had no like-minded refugee colleagues to sustain him. Only Adolf Löwe, a man of immense practical experience and capacities, was available to him, but he was in Manchester living on the tiny stipend of a fellowship at the University. The few Hungarian art histo-

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rians—Arnold Hauser and Frederick Antal—were Marxists, and Mannheim did not feel at home with them, though as far as I know he was certainly on amicable terms with them.

So, despite his membership in the Moot, T. S. Eliot's profound appreciation of his intellectual and moral qualities, and other strong indications that he was not entirely alone, nothing assuaged Mannheim's anxiety about his status and his future. That was a great pity. He was a man of great intellectual and moral merit. He was a good person, capable of receiving and expressing affection, but he needed more than that. He had a genuine drive for truth and delight in intellectual activity. He said many things which are still worthy of meditation.

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Phidias in Exile

DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN

1

Phidias crowned the Parthenon with stone
Centaurs so real they cracked to breathe.
Sculptor in marble, gold and ivory,
He hammered up the Athena Parthenos,
Statue of his city's patroness.
But rivals cried that he had stolen gold
Belonging to Athena's draperies,

And only a King could save him. Pericles,
Fearing the Persians more than decadence,
Had ordered the statuary gold all made
In moving plates that once unscrewed and weighed
Proved the hated sculptor's innocence.
Still his furious rivals were not done
Plotting to trip him into hell or prison:

Some critic spied among the warriors
Raging around Athena's marble shield
A deep-lined brow under a shouldered stone.
Phidias himself! Now they'd see him jailed
Or exiled for sacrilege, for drawing his face
On a holy monument in a public place.
O Lord of Eternity, had they but known

The monumental scale of his delight
In freeing gods from stone, not a one
That fed on envy would have abided it!
Somebody would have knifed him on the street.
Knowing the glory that was his alone,
They would not have allowed him to live on
In light or gloom, in exile or in prison.

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2

Banished, he fled to Elis. The Temple of Zeus
Stood vacant there, its holy of holies
Awaiting the promised image of that God.
No man alive since Homer had his vision
Could carve out such an idol but Phidias,
The world agreed. In taking the commission
He prayed for grace. Rumor led to legend

Rancor made the masterpiece, rancor against
His fatherland, the State of Athens
Became the medium of the Olympian Zeus;
But it was gold and ivory upon cypress,
Golden hair and beard upon ivory flesh
That gleamed in nakedness from shoulder to loin
Where golden draperies hid the divine source.

Sapphire eyes shone under a wide brow
With such compassion as no man driven
By mere lust for vengeance could portray;
Such kindness as men pray for every day
Smiled upon eight years of this creation.
Rancor might have beat a hand to powder
When it would not open for balancing

The winged lady, Victory. But over the years
Of dust and heartbreak, triumph and tedium
Only sympathy with the god might succor him
Until he wondered, dreaming and waking
Who was being made and who was making
The statue, Olympian Zeus, or Phidias.
Sympathy for the god, so far from home.

3

That figure, seven times the size of man,
More vivid than a man, sat there enthroned,
Bent graciously under the sky-blue dome

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Which grazed His emerald laurel wreath.
All who entered shuddered first in terror
Zeus might rise in wrath or careless thought
And bring the sky down crashing to the floor.
Kind eyes assured the faithful He would not.
Bulls led to the altar for sacrifice,
Lions, hawks grew gentle in that presence,
Charmed past fear. Men soul-distressed,
Heartbroken, left their pain under the eyes
Of the Guardian uniting gods and men,
The suppliant's protector. Grave misfortune
To die without ever setting eyes upon it!
All agreed. The artist conquered Hellas,
Hellas and the world, with this colossus.

4

For centuries no clear idea of God
Ruled men. Each thought of his own likeness.
Now no witness who beheld this shape
Of gold and ivory under the temple dome
Could picture Zeus in any other form.
So the high priest came to question Phidias,
His tools and methods, if the golden figure
Stood worthy in all ways of divine nature . . .

O Lord, Almighty Artist who apprenticed
Not only the youth of Elis, but all matter,
Fire, earth and sea, wind, bird and beast,
What in the name of God could Phidias say
Except there had never been a better sculptor,
No substance finer than gold and ivory?
Better to work up fire and earth and sea
Maybe, but who has ready tools for this?

A man can only work on what is bound
Here within water, earth and fire and wind.
O Lord of Olympia, Zeus, Supreme Artist

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Who quarried pure substance, sap and soul
To make the man, the eagle and the bull,
What could the poor sculptor tell the priest,
But that no man could be a better artist?
Let him dare compare a man with god!

Who would say that Zeus ought not be shown
In human form for fear it might please fools
To measure a mortal against God and lose
All sanctity in trade? Only a madman
Compares himself to a masterpiece like this,
In beauty, strength, insight or enormity.
And who would say no image should be made
Of God on earth, who knew the agony

Of longing to love and honor Him nearby?
We are children in exile, far from home,
Who in a waking dream reach out in darkness
For mother and father, wanting love and wisdom
No gold or stone can capture or express—
Our eyes are blind to these. There is only one
Vessel on earth that bears them, human form,
Which Phidias dared to lend to God's purpose.

Men loved the statue, hated Phidias.
Eight hundred years it sat there, long enough
To fix an image in the minds of men
So future gods in thundering power and pride
Must live or die in service of human love.
As for the man who lent the divine vision:
In Elis as in Athens he was tried
For stealing the god's gold, and died in prison.

✪ DANIEL MARK EPSTEIN's sixth book of poetry, *The Boy in the Well,* will be published in 1995 by Overlook Press. His books of prose include *Star of Wonder* and *Sister Aimee.*

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The Middle Years

WALTER McDONALD

My wife sips tomato juice
in turbulence. In clouds, we sway and bump
with plastic glasses balanced in our fists.

Her hand flies high in a down draft,
falls hard to the tray, and wide-eyed
she laughs. Seat-belt signs flash on,

attendants down, strapped in. She glances out
at lightning. The plane slams hard,
a door pops open and luggage tumbles out.

Somewhere, a woman screams. The captain's voice
comes on, mellow as Musak, *Folks, lean back*
and enjoy the flight, and we'll have you in Dallas

right on time. My wife shakes a wrist
to get the cold blood pumping. Her hand
is messy with a cracked plastic glass of ice.

I lean giddy to her eyes, my hand slick as hers,
my juice glass sloshing like champagne,
and lift it dripping to her lips.

✪ WALTER McDONALD is Horn Professor of English at Texas Tech University. His most recent books of poems include *Counting Survivors, Night Landings,* and *After the Noise of Saigon.*

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Julian

1918–1994

JEREMY BERNSTEIN

In the late 1950s, when I was finishing my decade of study at Harvard, I witnessed an encounter between two of the titans of modern physics—Wolfgang Pauli, who died in 1958 at the age of fifty-eight, and Julian Schwinger, who died this past summer at the age of seventy-six. Pauli was one of the architects of the quantum theory. He was also a fabulous character—"identical to his caricature"—as Robert Oppenheimer once remarked. He had a very large head that bobbed rhythmically as he listened to presentations of physics papers, of which he was a devastating critic with no tolerance at all for the mediocre. Of one paper, he noted that it wasn't *even* wrong, and of a physicist whose work he didn't think much of, he said, "so young and already so unknown." Schwinger—our local titan and one of the founders of the modern quantum electrodynamics, of which more later—also had a large head, which he kept characteristically tilted to one side when he listened to physics presentations. But he had a much more kindly disposition. He also had a much more democratic attitude towards other people's papers. He didn't read most of them and rarely cited any. He once told me that it was hard enough doing original research without confusing yourself with other people's ideas.

In the year in question, Pauli had made one of his frequent visits to the United States from Switzerland, where he held a professorship in Zurich. He was to give a lecture at an American Physical Society meeting in New York and then go on to Cambridge. I was going to the meeting anyway and was charged by Schwinger to seek out Pauli to invite him to come to Harvard for a private lecture session by the Harvard group, followed by a reception at the Schwinger's. Pauli was not difficult to locate at the meeting, but I was somewhat terrorized by his reputation and barely managed to get out my invitation in what must have been a loud whisper. Pauli had nicknames for everyone. He referred to Schwinger as "His Majesty," and I became known as "the whisperer." "The whisperer," Pauli was reported to have said, "has given me a summons from His Majesty to come to Harvard."

The main event at our session with Pauli was of course a presentation by Schwinger. But the junior researchers had also been invited to present their wares. I declined this opportunity promptly. I felt that I had nothing to say that would have had the remotest interest for Pauli. I also was aware of an exchange that he had had not long before with a Hungarian-born American physicist named Eugene Guth. Guth had made the mistake of interrupting Pauli in the course of a lecture to offer some unwanted bit of erudition. After listening for a moment or two, Pauli had said, "Guth, whatever you know, I know." There was no way I was going to get set up for the same treatment. But one or two brave young souls did make brief presentations. Pauli listened patiently and said nothing nasty that I can recall.

Then it was Schwinger's turn. Schwinger was famous for his lecture style. He never used notes. Formulae came tumbling out of him in cascades. He did the most extraordinarily complicated calculations while standing at the blackboard with no props whatever. How he managed to keep all of this straight I cannot imagine. As a performance, it was overwhelming. "When most people give a lecture they show you how a problem can be done,"

✪ JEREMY BERNSTEIN's latest book is entitled *An Introduction to Cosmology.*

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Oppenheimer once noted. "When Schwinger gives a lecture he shows you that only *he* can do the problem." Schwinger was then engaged in a reformulation of the quantum theory, a tricky business to present to Pauli, one of the creators of the theory. It was a little like some artist, after the fact, showing Michelangelo his plans for revising the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel. Pauli did not interrupt.

There was a moment of silence after the lecture. Then Pauli said, "Wasn't that a little trivial?" I much admired the juxtaposition of the "little" and the "trivial." I thought I saw flash over Schwinger's usually impassive features the somewhat rictal look that boxers get when they have received an unexpected and unwelcome blow to the abdomen—that forced smile which is supposed to say "Is that all you've got? It wasn't nothing." Then Schwinger said, "I meant it to be." It was a remarkable answer and it caught Pauli completely off guard. What could one say? In fact, Pauli found nothing to say, and the dialogue stopped there. Both fighters withdrew from the ring.

There is no way of producing genius by education. The best one can hope for is an educational system that allows it to thrive. In Schwinger's case, it was the New York City public schools of the 1930s. Schwinger, who was born on February 12, 1918, was the son of immigrant Jewish parents who had come to the United States before the turn of the century. (While no biography of Schwinger has been written, the interested reader would profit, as I did, from a reading of *QED and the Men Who Made It*, by Silvan S. Schweber, Princeton University Press, 1994. Much of this book requires technical background, but the biographical details are invaluable.) His parents came from families that worked in the clothing industry. Benjamin, Schwinger's father, was a talented designer of women's clothing. In the years I knew him, Schwinger was a fastidious and elegant dresser—rather in the Broadway mode. Unlike many immigrant families, the Schwinger family—there was an older brother, Harold—was always fairly well off. Nonetheless, both boys went to Townsend Harris High School—a public school that was noted for catering to the needs of highly gifted students. Two decades later the Bronx High School of Science served the same function. In one year it graduated Steven Weinberg and Sheldon Glashow, who shared the 1979 Nobel Prize in Physics with Abdus Salam. Weinberg succeeded Schwinger at Harvard, when he left for the University of California at Los Angeles in 1972, and Glashow had been a Schwinger student at Harvard. From 1945, when Schwinger joined the Harvard faculty, until 1972, when he left, he had produced more than sixty students, a great many of whom went on to have very distinguished careers in physics.

Schwinger's genius for physics and mathematics was recognized very early. In high school he was already reading advanced papers in theoretical physics. Schwinger once told me that he had learned a lot of physics and mathematics by reading the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*—the eleventh edition that really had serious science articles written by such people as Einstein. In 1934, when he was sixteen, Schwinger entered the City College of New York, then a tuition-free institution noted for its excellent faculty and its brilliant students. He managed to compile a very erratic record there, more or less failing courses such as English. He was spending all of his time in the library reading physics papers and beginning to do serious original work. What would have happened to him is not clear, but his lot was certainly eased by a chance encounter with I. I. Rabi, the Columbia physicist.

Rabi, who became one of Schwinger's closest friends, was very fond of telling the story of this encounter. It must have taken place around 1935, after the publication of a celebrated paper by Einstein, Boris Podolsky, and Nathan Rosen on the foundations of the quantum theory. In the version of the story that Rabi told me, he was at the time trying to understand this paper. His method was to bring in a student or a junior faculty member to his office and to lecture to him. In this case, he brought in Lloyd Motz, who was then an instructor at City College and who knew Schwinger very well. At one point they got stuck. Motz then brought into the office what Rabi referred to as a "kid in knee pants." I suspect that this was a figure of speech since I cannot imagine Schwinger wearing knee pants at the age of seventeen. In any event, Schwinger settled the argument in short order.

Rabi was very impressed. He was so impressed that by main force he got Schwinger

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into Columbia with a scholarship despite his poor record at City College. In fact, Schwinger managed to make Phi Beta Kappa at Columbia, even though he failed a chemistry course that he thought too dull to study for. Rabi once told me that Schwinger took a course with the late George Uhlenbeck in some branch of advanced theoretical physics. Uhlenbeck was a visiting professor at Columbia that year. As was his wont, Schwinger never went to class. Uhlenbeck complained to Rabi and Rabi told Schwinger that it was impolite of him not to attend the lectures. I doubt that Schwinger's attendance improved, but Rabi said that he was essentially perfect in Uhlenbeck's final oral examination on which he even managed to use Uhlenbeck's mathematical notation.

From the age of sixteen on, Schwinger functioned as a professional physicist. When he was nineteen he published his first paper and this became his Ph.D. thesis. It was completed before he received his bachelor's degree. By this time he was the principal theoretical physicist in Rabi's very active atomic physics group. His work habits became legendary. He would appear in the laboratory between four and six in the afternoon, having just awakened. He would then have breakfast while the others were having dinner. Anyone who wanted to work with him had to be prepared to spend the night. (In fact he tried to get Uhlenbeck to give him his oral at ten o'clock at night. He was told in no uncertain terms that it would be at ten in the morning.)

Schwinger kept this nocturnal schedule when he went to Berkeley in 1939 to work with Robert Oppenheimer. They must have made a strange pair. For Oppenheimer physics was a group activity. He liked to be at the nerve center of this collective energy. For Schwinger, it was a solitary activity. He did his own thing in his own way. This was true at the beginning and remained true throughout his career—which was somewhat sad toward the end when he became more and more isolated from the rest of the physics mainstream.

The work that Schwinger did during the period in a variety of fields of theoretical physics was certainly work of which any theoretical physicist would have been proud. It was the sort of thing that found its way into textbooks. The earlier books used to refer to Schwinger. Now the ideas have become so standard that no one remembers who created them. It was not work that would have earned Schwinger the Nobel Prize in Physics that he shared with Richard Feynman and Tomonaga Shin'ichiro in 1965. That work—the creation of quantum electrodynamics—came immediately after the Second World War and used both experimental and theoretical techniques that had been created during the war, especially in the development of radar.

I imagine that it was under Rabi's influence that Schwinger chose during the war to move to Cambridge to work on radar as opposed to going to Los Alamos with Oppenheimer. Rabi once told me that he had chosen to work on radar rather than the atomic bomb because he was "serious about winning the war." Without radar he felt we could lose it, while the bomb seemed to him to be something of a long shot.

Schwinger developed a general theory of guided electromagnetic waves—wave guides—in cavities of various shapes. In formulating it, he perfected many of the techniques that he later used in quantum electrodynamics. Still he found time to do other physics. After the successful Trinity test in the New Mexico desert, which took place on July 16, 1945, Schwinger visited Los Alamos to give a series of lectures on nuclear physics.

This was where he first encountered Feynman. The two of them were almost exactly the same age. This surprised Feynman, since Schwinger had already been publishing for nearly a decade. Feynman was still rather unknown to most physicists, although the people who did know him regarded him as a genius comparable to Schwinger. Many years later, Feynman described his meeting with Schwinger at Los Alamos. He said, in his inimitable way, "The beauty of one of his lectures. He comes in, with his head a little bit to one side. He comes in like a bull into the ring and puts his notebook down and then begins. And the beautiful organized way of putting one idea after another. Everything very clear from beginning to end. You can imagine for a lecturer like me what a sensation it was to see such a thing. I was supposed to be a good lecturer according to some people, but this was really a masterpiece."

Both men were so gifted it is hard to compare them. Feynman was, perhaps, Mozartean while Schwinger was more Bachian—perhaps. In the late 1950s, I once watched as Feynman

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informally lectured a group of his colleagues about a new idea. Schwinger stood off to one side with his head slightly tilted and the suspicion of a smile on his face. It was a look that was both admiring and skeptical. I wish I had asked him what he was thinking.

Schwinger's masterpiece was his formulation of quantum electrodynamics. This was also Feynman's masterpiece. What then is quantum electrodynamics? First, what is classical electrodynamics? It is the study of electrically charged particles interacting with electromagnetic fields. Since these fields are in turn generated by other electrically charged particles, it is really the study of electrically charged particles interacting with one another. The purest form of such a system is that of electrons interacting with one another and with electromagnetic radiation. The classical theory was largely created in the nineteenth century by the Scottish physicist James Clerk Maxwell and then perfected by Einstein.

With the advent of the quantum theory in the 1920s, new possibilities opened up. The quantum theory allows processes that are forbidden in classical physics. These are processes in which energy and momentum are not conserved—but only briefly. One of the Heisenberg uncertainty relations specifies the time that such a process is allowed to take, given that the energy fails to be conserved by some amount. The greater the violation, the shorter the time allowed for it to manifest itself. For example, an electron can spontaneously emit a quantum of electromagnetic radiation—a photon—but then it must re-absorb it rapidly enough so that the Heisenberg energy-time uncertainty relation is obeyed. This is called the "virtual emission" of a photon by an electron. It goes on all the time. It is the sort of thing that quantum electrodynamics was created to deal with.

These virtual processes subtly change the properties of the electron. This was well understood in the 1930s when such men as Pauli created the original theory. But there were two problems. The experiments done in the 1930s were not accurate enough to demonstrate these effects unambiguously. Worse, the theory when applied straightforwardly, gave infinite results—that is to say, it was total nonsense, which was the real problem. It was left unresolved when that generation of physicists went off to war. After the war, using techniques that had been developed for radar, various physicists finally exhibited these quantum electrodynamic effects in laboratory experiments that were so precise that they could not be argued away. It was now up to the theorists to make sense of all of this. The heroes of this story were Schwinger, Feynman, and, quite independently, Tomonaga in Japan. It was Freeman Dyson who put it all together and made it accessible to the average working physicist. That Dyson never got a Nobel Prize for this is, to me, a scandal.

Schwinger and Feynman's approaches were so different that, until Dyson showed the connection, it seemed as if there were two quantum electrodynamics that led to the same results but from totally different starting points. Schwinger began at the beginning. He carefully derived the equations of the theory from first principles—isolating the infinite terms. He then solved the equations in a series of successive approximations, a very difficult bit of calculational mathematics. I recently once again consulted the collection of papers Schwinger edited on quantum electrodynamics (*Quantum Electrodynamics*, 1958). In it he reproduced the third paper in his series of three: "Quantum Electrodynamics III. The Electromagnetic Properties of the Electron-Radiative Corrections to Scattering," which he published in the *Physical Review* in 1949. Reading it now gives me the same feeling as it did when I first read it some forty years ago. It is a large and intricate work—inexorable, like a Bach fugue. But one has the feeling that if one took the time—a lot of time—one could follow it. The rules are there. Schwinger also reproduces Feynman's two original papers—the ones in which the so-called "Feynman diagrams" that Schwinger used to refer to as "space-time pictures" are introduced. Reading these papers also gave me the same feeling I had when I first read them. They are full of wit. Delightful mathematical tricks abound. But I recall that I felt then that I would never really understand them. What justified the tricks? It was Dyson's two papers—also reproduced in the collection—that showed that Feynman's diagrams and Schwinger's calculus were two ways of representing exactly the same mathematics.

What really counted in these papers were the numerical results. Schwinger got there first. He computed a tiny change in the

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electron's magnetic interaction—its so-called "magnetic moment." (I always thought that "magnetic moment" would be a great name for a perfume.) This number has been refined again and again over the years, and it has been measured with ever-increasing precision. It is now the most precisely known quantity in physics. A recent experimental value is

$$g\text{-}2=1159652200(40)\times10^{-12}$$

while the theoretical value is

$$g\text{-}2=1159652460(44)(127)\times10^{-12}$$

The numbers in parentheses represent error estimates. The agreement is remarkable.

When I entered Harvard in 1947 as a freshman, I was entirely unaware of any of this and could scarcely have cared less. Over the next three years I made a series of Brownian motions through various majors, finally ending up in mathematics in my senior year. My guru was the mathematician George Mackey. Mackey had originally been trained as a physicist and had become interested in trying to formalize—as mathematicians like to do—the mathematics of the quantum theory. It seemed like an interesting program and one that I might like to work on, except that I knew next to nothing about the quantum theory. Mackey suggested that I take Schwinger's course, which purported to be an introduction to the subject on the first-year graduate level. By this time, I had at least heard of Schwinger from my physics major colleagues but had never set eyes on him.

My first impression of "Julian," as he was known to all his students—who wouldn't have dared to call him that to his face—was that he was "larval." He had the pallor that one associates with those asparagus that the French grow under the ground, and for the same reason—lack of sunlight. He was certainly overweight. A wraithlike Indian graduate student who was sitting next to me, and who would have been blown away in a zephyr, commented ("w's" became "v's"): "Our Schvinger is *very* fat." He wasn't *that* fat—just plump.

The class was nominally scheduled for sometime after 11:00 A.M., thank God. We would watch for Schwinger to drive up in his small blue Cadillac, and when it was spotted, we all took our seats. In he would walk, as Feynman said, "like a bull into the ring." He had no notes and as a rule made no mention of anything that had been said in the previous lecture. He just began at the beginning and raced on to the end. One had to write like mad just to keep up with what was being put on the blackboard.

I had, it turned out, taken this course at a fortunate moment. Schwinger was just beginning his work on re-formulating the quantum theory. Therefore he began the course by re-examining all the experimental reasons why there was a quantum theory in the first place. This was an exercise in phenomenology involving almost no formal mathematics. It was a lot harder to do—as I found out years later when I began teaching the quantum theory—than solving equations. Schwinger was a master of this as well. I still have the notes. I have never seen a better introduction to the subject. About the middle of the year, Schwinger began doing his own formalism. He lost a great many of us. I, for one, went down to MIT to audit Victor Weisskopf's course, which was a great deal more down to earth. However, many of the ideas that Schwinger was developing have also become part of the literature of our field.

After I took my master's degree in mathematics, the mathematics department made it clear that I was spending much too much of my time taking physics courses. I would have to make up my mind to be either a physics or a mathematics graduate student. I chose physics and have never regretted it. I wanted to get started on my Ph.D. thesis. I thought that it would be a mistake to try to work with Schwinger. He already had many students, and they knew a lot more physics than I did. Typically, they got a few minutes every week or two to discuss their thesis problems. Many said that during the two or three years that they worked on their theses they might have seen Schwinger for all of twenty minutes. I figured that I might need about twenty minutes a day. I chose, therefore, to work with a then-young postdoctoral researcher named Abraham Klein, who has been for many years at the University of Pennsylvania. Klein had been a Schwinger student, so that I belong to the next generation, the "grandsons" of Schwinger.

It was only after I took my degree, and became a postdoctoral fellow at Harvard my-

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self, that I got to know Schwinger. We were then such a small group of theoretical physicists at Harvard and MIT that we all knew one another. Once a week we would meet for lunch after Schwinger's lecture in one of the Cambridge restaurants where we could all fit around one table. Julian, as I now called him to his face, used to try out his latest ideas on people such as Weisskopf. I saved one of the paper napkins on which he had written some equations. I remember the atmosphere. It was very exciting and, as it turned out, rather delusional. The reason was that the kind of physics that was needed in this new world of elementary particles was not really Julian's forte. The problems were not very well posed. What was needed was not Julian's kind of formal mathematical power but a kind of speculative intuition. A new generation of physicists—among them Murray Gell-Mann, T. D. Lee, and C. N. Yang—became our intellectual leaders, later to be succeeded by Steven Weinberg and Sheldon Glashow. Julian did not seem to fit into this very well. The physics on my napkin, while perhaps not wrong, was not really relevant to what was going on.

Just after I left Cambridge in 1957, Julian seems to have undergone a life change. He had gotten married a decade earlier to a very attractive brunette woman by the name of Clarice Carrol. He had subsequently given up smoking. This was a good thing for more than one reason. It was reported that one night while he was doing his work on quantum electrodynamics in his office he dropped a lighted cigarette into a paper-laden wastebasket. A serious conflagration was avoided because a charwoman noticed smoke coming from the wastebasket. But in 1958 Pauli died—very young by current standards. This appears to have greatly affected Schwinger. Like Schwinger, Pauli was also very overweight and under-exercised. It seems as if Pauli's early death determined Julian to become a model of physical fitness. I wish I had been around Cambridge to see the transformation. I recall that during my earlier days I was an object of some ridicule because I rode bicycles, rowed, and played tennis. After Julian went to UCLA in 1972 I was told that he played tennis with a pro almost every day. The few times I saw him during those years he was sun-brown and looked very fit indeed.

I am not sure how happy Schwinger was then. Rabi once told me that Schwinger had bitterly complained to him that the younger generation no longer took him seriously. Colleagues at UCLA told me that they never saw him. I am sure that this isolation was self-imposed. Julian was doing his own thing in his own way. But one cannot have it both ways. Einstein also did his own thing in his own way—rejecting the quantum theory to the end. But he didn't care what the younger generation thought. That was their problem. Given a different mind-set, Julian, based on a lifetime of research, might have written one of those multi-volume texts that sets the tone for a whole field for a generation. As it was, he did publish a few books. But, as usual, they were his own thing written in his own way. It was not clear what the advantages were of doing things his way, and few people bothered to sort out what he had in mind.

During those years, I sent Julian and Clarice the odd Christmas card and occasionally got an answer, always from Clarice. Once she even sent me a reprint of a paper that Julian had found while cleaning a closet. I never did have the chance to visit them. The last news I had about Julian, before his unexpected death in July, was that he had become interested in cold fusion. Someone sent me a reprint of a lecture that Julian had given in Japan on the subject. I didn't have the heart to read it.

In writing this appreciation, I am well aware of what I cannot convey, especially to the younger people who were not there. It is all very well to say that someone was a genius or a fantastic lecturer. But how can one re-create the feelings that we had about people like Julian Schwinger? Our generation and the generations that followed have certainly produced extraordinary physicists and remarkable teachers. I have known many of them. But I still feel that in the days when people such as Schwinger and Pauli were at the height of their powers, giants walked the Earth.

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The Story of a Classic

Anne and After

JOSEPH GERARD BRENNAN

Writing at her home in Cavendish, Prince Edward Island, the Canadian writer Lucy Maud Montgomery, age thirty-one, made a long entry in her journal-diary for August 16, 1907. Acknowledging a five-month gap in her entries, she wrote that there hadn't been much to write about, even though she had been "very busy and contented." Then she added, "One really important thing has come my way since my last entry. On April 15th I received a letter from L. C. Page Co. of Boston accepting the MS of a book I had sent them and offering to publish it on a royalty basis!" She had already broken the news to one of her two literary pen pals—both became true friends—Ephraim Weber of Alberta; the other, George B. MacMillan of Aloa, Scotland, would learn in September that the title of this, her first book, was *Anne of Green Gables* and that she was already working on a sequel.

Continuing her journal entry, Miss Montgomery notes that the book stemmed from her recalling a line she had put into her notebook some time ago—"Elderly couple apply to orphan asylum for a boy. By mistake a girl is sent them." She adds that she had begun writing the book in 1905—it had started its career as a serial for a Sunday school paper. The following year she sent copies to four publishers, all of whom rejected it. She put it away for a while, then mailed off a revised version to L. C. Page Co., which, accepting it, asked for a sequel.

First published in June 1908, *Anne* flew through six editions by the end of the following November. Most reviewers expressed delight, although the *New York Times* found the heroine "mawkish." Sales quickly mounted to the million mark, and an early count of translations turned up at least seventeen renderings in foreign languages, including Polish and Icelandic. Japanese girls took Anne to their scrutable hearts in their language and in school theatrical productions. Mollie Gillen writes that, by 1956, three million copies of Anne books were circulating in British countries, not including Canada—60 percent of those counted were *Anne of Green Gables*, the rest its seven sequels.

By 1987 Anne was a heroine all over again with the appearance of Kevin Russell's television production of *Anne of Green Gables* starring Megan Follows as Anne and Colleen Dewhurst as Marilla. A film sequel, *Anne of Avonlea*, took its title from Maud's own first sequel to the Green Gables book, though parts of the film, available on Walt Disney Productions home video, drew on incidents and characters from later Anne books. A serial spin-off from the Anne films used format and selected material from Miss Montgomery's 1911 book *The Story Girl*.

For years tourists have made pilgrimages to Prince Edward Island (PEI) searching for relics of Anne. Since the early 1930s Cavendish on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, where Maud Montgomery spent most of the first half of her life, has reigned as the center of

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the Island's national park. A musical version of Anne plays every summer to excited crowds, while souvenir gift-shop cash registers ring gratefully. The PEI economy has long since learned to rely on *Anne* as a healthy annual source of income.

Scholars, including many in women's studies, have gathered around Anne and her creator to work in a rich field of Canadian and United States letters. Mollie Gillen's short biography of Miss Montgomery, *The Wheel of Things* (1975), was followed by the first of three published volumes of Montgomery's journals edited by Mary Rubio and Elizabeth Waterston, the latest volume appearing 1992. The fourth volume is not scheduled for publication until Rubio has brought out her authorized biography of Montgomery, a task now nearing completion. A collection of Montgomery's letters to the Scotsman G. B. MacMillan, *My Dear Mr. M.* (1980), was edited by Francis Bolger and Elizabeth Epperly. Epperly's study of Montgomery's literary heroines, *The Fragrance of Sweet-Grass*, sets a high standard for future critics of Montgomery's work. An international symposium on Montgomery was held in PEI in June 1994.

Montgomery pretended to be astonished when she learned of the number of adults attracted to Anne as well as the expected support of young girl readers. She was surprised, she wrote to MacMillan, that the reviewers "seem to take the book so seriously"—as if it were meant for grown-up readers and not merely for girls." Yet she didn't really believe in that "merely"—for she rather hoped "some grown-ups will like it too." In any case Maud Montgomery was genuinely surprised when she learned of the extent of Anne's welcome in the adult world, including in very high places. The seventy-two-year-old Mark Twain wrote her, Maud, that Anne was "the dearest and most lovable child in fiction since the immortal Alice." The Governor General of Canada, Earl Gray, arranged a meeting with "the author of Anne" to meet him at a posh luncheon in Orwell, PEI. Years later Montgomery heard from Britain's prime minister Stanley Baldwin, asking for "hope of opportunity of shaking your hand for the pleasure your books have given me." (Baldwin's opportunity came in due course at an Ottawa garden party for the Prince of Wales to which Maud was duly invited.) Another British premier, Ramsay MacDonald, just missed meeting her on a visit to PEI—"I've read every Montgomery book I could get my hands on," he told a friend, "two or three times over."

In 1989 David Godine, a Boston publisher, brought out a hardcover gift-book edition of *Anne of Green Gables* with illustrations by Lauren Mills. A summary of the story appears on the copyright page:

> Anne, an eleven-year-old orphan, is sent by mistake to live with a lonely middle-aged brother and sister on a Prince Edward Island farm and proceeds to make an indelible impression on everyone around her.

Concise enough. The theme of the home- or mother-seeking orphan sounds as a leitmotif through Montgomery's writing, the touching short story "Charlotte's Quest" (1933) is a late example. Most commentators agree in tracing this dominant theme to Maud's own lonely, near-parentless childhood.

In Anne's case, the mistake happened when a Nova Scotia orphanage sent a girl to the couple rather than the boy that stern Marilla wanted to be a help to her sixty-year-old brother with the farm work. Matthew is late meeting the girl with his horse and buggy at Bright River station, but the thin, poorly dressed, eleven-year-old redhead quickly reassures him, losing no time in showing him how well she uses her imagination:

> I had made up my mind that if you didn't come for me tonight I'd go down the track to that big wild cherry at the bend and climb up into it to stay all night. I wouldn't be a bit afraid, and it would be lovely to sleep in a wild cherry tree all white with bloom in the moonshine, don't you think? You could imagine you were dwelling in marble halls, couldn't you.

The words from a song in Michael Balfe's opera *The Bohemian Girl*:

> I dreamt that I dwelt in marble halls
> With vassals and serfs by my side

marks the first of Anne's multitudinous references in this and sequel books to remembered bits from Victorian and Edwardian po-

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etry, drama, tales, novels, and songs familiar to Maud Montgomery from her girlhood on. On the homeward drive to Green Gables, the "peculiarly sweet voice" of the child celebrating the springtime beauty of the island roads makes the sixty-year-old farmer her vassal forever.

Anne's feverish imagination, starved at two foster homes and the orphanage that followed, holds a lively mix of school-reader poetry (Walter Scott's *The Lady of the Lake*, James Thompson's *The Seasons*) and cheap romance novels borrowed from the older girls. To Anne all things are alive—*omnia animata* as the old philosophers said. She turns roadside trees into conscious beings welcoming her; a leaning plum tree in spring dress offers a bridal veil to her sensibility, leading her to confide to Matthew that she loves pretty dresses—she dreamed of them at the orphanage, particularly pale blue silk ones. To the questions she fires at Matthew—what is an alabaster brow? what makes the PEI roads red? which would he rather be, divinely beautiful, dazzlingly clever, or angelically good?—the poor man can answer only, "Well now, I dunno." An avenue of apple trees in blossom strikes the child into temporary silence from which she emerges to christen the road bordered with apple trees the White Way of Delight, and Barry's Pond the Lake of Shining Waters. Not to be outdone by her heroine, the narrator has her own purple patches at the ready to support her small heroine:

> Overhead was one long canopy of snowy fragrant bloom. Below the boughs the air was full of a purple twilight and far ahead a glimpse of painted sunset sky shone like a great rose window at the end of a cathedral aisle. . . . Here and there a wild plum leaned out from the bank like a white-clad girl tiptoeing to her own reflection.

But shock and plummeting spirits interrupt Anne's response to the glories of Spring and the prospect of a real home for the first time in her life. Nowhere on the drive to Green Gables could Matthew find the courage to tell the girl that it was all a mistake, that a boy not a girl was what they wanted. At first Marilla is resolute in the face of Anne's tears, which were mixed with eloquent chatter. They can't possibly keep her, and the child's wild imagining makes Marilla doubly uneasy. Had she known that Saint Teresa called imagination the Mad Woman of the House ("La Loca de la Casa") she would have agreed—though she might have found the phrase itself too imaginative.

Yet almost from the first Marilla has been silently weakening—the suspense is managed expertly by the narrator here as she listens to the improbable things the waif offers on her own behalf, as well as praise of the natural beauty surrounding Green Gables. But the child's flow of words is unnerving, and besides what good would she be to us? Here Matthew unexpectedly takes the high ground—"We might be some good to her." Marilla's complete surrender comes only after she drives with Anne to see Mrs. Spencer about sending her back, and there meets the horrible Mrs. Blewett, willing to take over the girl, her wiry limbs giving promise of bone-hard work. Anne has said it: Mrs. Blewett looks exactly like a gimlet. Wonderful lifting of the tension occurs moment by moment as hope dawns on Anne Shirley that she may stay.

Anne's situation is given and strongly backed by the narrator whose skill is tested in deploying the flow of troubles and triumphs entailed by her heroine's character. The early Mrs. Lynde episode is a gem. Like a little Don Quixote, ablaze with her seriocomic ideals, Anne confronts Marilla's formidable neighbor with a surprise polemic augmented by foot stamps of increasing violence:

> I hate you. . . . How dare you call me skinny and ugly? How dare you say I am freckled and red-headed? You are a rude, impolite, unfeeling woman. . . . How would you like to be told that you are fat and clumsy and probably haven't a spark of imagination in you? I don't care if I do hurt your feelings by saying so. I hope I hurt them. You have hurt mine worse than they ever were hurt before even by Mrs. Thomas's intoxicated husband. And I'll never forgive you for it, never, never!

Later, persuaded to apologize by gentle Matthew, Anne kneels before Rachel Lynde in a production worthy of Eleonora Duse, winning quick forgiveness from the good-hearted neighbor—one of the strongest characters in

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Montgomery's inventive repertoire; Mrs. Lynde's inductive power rivals that of John Stuart Mill.

Sparked by Montgomery's talent for comic effects, a series of Anne-scrapes follows, many of them ending with grand confessional scenes in Anne's best baroque manner. Her integrity is tested when Marilla accuses her of stealing an amethyst broach Anne admires to the point of nuttiness ("Do you think amethysts can be the souls of good violets?"), forcing an invented confession from the child in her desperate desire to go to a promised Sunday school picnic. She cracks a slate over teasing classmate Gilbert Blythe's head—"Carrots!"—showing that girls can dish it out as well as boys. The episode is useful as well as amusing for it introduces the lad who will play the roles, in succession, of Anne's academic rival, chum, suitor, husband—though the last is not cued in until the third sequel to the first Anne book.

Anne gets her best friend, Diana Barry, drunk by serving her stiff shots of currant wine mistaken for raspberry cordial. She and Diana jump violently on a bed they do not know is inhabited by Diana's august Aunt Josephine. Anne bakes a cake for the new minister's wife using liniment instead of vanilla flavoring. She dyes her hair green with an occult liquid bought from a peddler who promises raven-black tresses upon application. She falls from a ridgepole, climbed in response to a schoolmate's dare, breaking her ankle. In her late Camelot phase, attended by sympathetic school friends, Anne lies down in black samite (wearing a shawl that belongs to Diana's mother) on a leaky flat that drifts sinkingly away on a Tennysonian pond and is rescued, to her chagrin, by Gilbert Blythe!

> Elaine the fair, Elaine the lovable,
> Elaine the lily maid of Astolat.

Composing the Green Gables tale, at a time when she had not as yet thought of sequels, Montgomery packed into a single book her whole concept of Anne's development, her awakening to self-consciousness and maturity as she entered her teens. As it turns out, Anne matures all too quickly. In the wake of the near-disastrous Elaine episode she announces her intention to give up the world of the romantic, to renounce (like Don Quixote?) her Gothic novels and wild imaginings—though Matthew urges her to keep just a little of her impossible dream. At fourteen she no longer makes people uneasy with her uncanny articulateness. At fifteen she says she doesn't want to use long words anymore. She has dropped Lady Cordelia Fitzgerald as her model. Very little talking to trees now; scrapes are rare. She who once defended acting on impulse ("If you stop to think it over you spoil it all") now pleases Marilla with her steadiness—"I used to be afraid she'd never get over her featherbrained ways, but she has. . . ." Anne says she never reads a book now unless Miss Stacy or the minister's wife deems it proper. (We don't believe that.) Anne tells Marilla that if she were a man she thinks she'd be a minister—"They have such an influence for the good if their theology is sound." (We don't believe that either.)

In the realm of what today's educators call cognitive skills, there is no holding Anne back; driven by rivalry, she speeds to the head of the class in a tie with Gilbert Blythe. Her admired teacher Miss Stacy encourages her to join those students planning to go to Queens "to pass for a teacher." Marilla agrees, "I believe in a girl being fitted to earn her own living whether she has to or not." Anne enjoys a smashing success with her public readings, but we must take the narrator's word for it; we hear Anne's voice less often, the voice we heard through the larger and best part of the book now gives way to that of the highly possessive narrator. In the late chapters of the Green Gables story, Queen's prize-winning Anne is no longer a dryad:

> Wandering happily in the farm end of the grove, waist deep among the bracken, singing softly to herself, with a wreath of rice lilies on her hair as if she were some wild divinity of the shadowy places.

Yet the Snow Queen, the White Way of Delight, Lake of Shining Waters, Lover's Lane, Haunted Wood—illumined by all those improbable sunsets of purple, gold, and cathedral rose—still hover about Anne, even though Matthew's death (tenderly portrayed)

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touches her with a cold awareness of the transience of things.

Anne wins the Avery scholarship that will enable her to take her B.A. at Redmond College (Dalhousie), but she gives it up when Marilla is left alone without Matthew at Green Gables, her growing eye trouble making management of house and small farm too much for her to handle by herself. It was traditional of course for women, particularly young women, to sacrifice themselves for others; it was expected of them. Yet Montgomery has a way of surprising us by laying out lateral twists in expected narrative development. Gilbert Blythe, himself a top academic award winner gives up his own first-choice teaching post in favor of Anne so that Anne may have it and live at home with Marilla at Green Gables while teaching locally. This shining instance of a male sacrificing his own interests for her, for a woman, brings Anne quickly to his side, all-forgiving of the teasing "carrots" episode, now five years in the past.

Anne's early reading public assumed from the start that Montgomery's domestic romance would end with pairing Anne and Gilbert, and she gave them what they expected. But that public had to wait three sequel books before their heroine put on the bridal veil she saw in the blossoming plum tree the day Matthew picked her up, an eleven-year-old orphan, at the Bright River station. Both Anne and Gilbert prudently hold off marriage until they are professionally qualified as schoolteacher and medical doctor respectively.

Love, marriage, home were close to Maud Montgomery's heart and to her commercial sense as well. She used both in turning out the stacks of short stories that she marketed long before Anne Shirley appeared on the scene. "I am frankly in literature to make a living out of it," she told MacMillan. Whether Montgomery represents early feminism or not depends on where one draws the line. As a professional writer and intelligent human being, she had native respect for women's independence and choice of career, though she believed the majority of women were happiest at home. Elizabeth Epperly agrees that Anne is a rebel, but only up to a point:

> At their best, Montgomery's heroines outface misunderstanding and underestimation; they learn to follow their own voices; they challenge constraint and expectation; they strive to distinguish between false and genuine (but not necessarily liberating) romance. Yet since Montgomery was not a radical and herself chose to fit into respectable society and take on the responsibilities her culture designated for her, she created heroines who also embrace tradition.

Like her creator, Anne lived in a quiet conservative society—that of Prince Edward Island ten years or so before the Great War. Her Avonlea folk count their ancestors as English and Scottish. Anne's political party of choice was Conservative simply because her beloved Matthew voted Conservative. Like those who surrounded her, Anne considered herself a Protestant, though once in the depths of despair she had imagined herself a Catholic taking the veil by a graveyard of buried hopes. French folk hardly appear in Avonlea save as hired help; usually they are not very bright, sometimes unreliable. Anne's dreams knew more of Tennyson's Camelot than of the rich culture of New France, of its voyagers who searched the heart of a continent, its habitants, of heroines such as Maria Chapdelaine who appeared in Canadian letters (thanks to a young wanderer from France) when Montgomery's Anne had already settled in home and motherhood. Avonlea was not Péribonka. Yet an artist in words—and Montgomery was that—should not be held at fault for silence about a culture so unlike her own.

Anne had a long foreground in her creator's life and writing. Lucy Maud Montgomery (she disliked "Lucy") was thirty-two when she opened her author's copy of the Green Gables book. Born in 1874 in the hamlet of Clifton, New London, Prince Edward Island, just one year after the Island had joined the Canadian Confederation, Maud grew up in nearby Cavendish on the Gulf of St. Lawrence, heiress to a tradition of family storytelling on cold nights before bright fires. That family was old and distinguished, the Scottish strain predominating. Her paternal grandfather held a seat in the Canadian senate for years. Maud was only twenty-one months old when her mother Clara Woolner Macneil died. Her father, Hugh Montgom-

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ery, a mobile sort given to quick-money schemes, moved west to Saskatchewan where his daughter, age fifteen, joined him and his second wife in Prince Albert. There she stayed for a year but saw little of her traveling father and did not care for his new wife. Maud's first pieces of verse and prose were published during her western year.

Returning to Cavendish and the stern domestic rule of her maternal grandparents, Maud filled her solitude with rhapsodic appreciations of natural beauty the Island so generously provided. As a growing girl she felt "very near to a kingdom of ideal beauty. Between it and me hung only a thin veil." In *Emily of New Moon* (1921), a semi-autobiographical novel with two sequels, Montgomery's young writer-heroine tells of experiencing "the flash," a moment of luminous certitude during which she becomes briefly aware of a higher reality mediated through natural beauty to the senses. Such transcendental epiphanies did not prevent Maud from taking her teacher's license after a year at Prince of Wales College, PEI (1893–94). She spent a year at Dalhousie University in Halifax, but unlike Anne Shirley, did not take her B.A. Maud taught school in small PEI communities—Biddeford, Bedeque, Belmont—before returning to Cavendish in 1898 for long years taking care of her demanding grandmother, with time off (1901–1902) for newspaper work on the *Halifax Echo* During this period Maud poured out a steady supply of poems and short stories, frequently selling the stories in serial form to a wide range of newspapers and magazines that welcomed her blend of domestic romance with a sure comic touch, especially where children were concerned. She preferred American to Canadian periodicals as a market because there were more of them and they paid more. (U.S. magazines such as *Good Housekeeping, Smart Set, McClures,* and *Delineator* had considerable cultural influence in Canada, particularly in the maritimes.) Small payments to Maud in fair numbers mounted up and larger checks followed. By the time she had settled in to the writing of her first book, *Anne of Green Gables,* she was earning close to a thousand dollars a year, a comfortable sum for a working woman in those days. *Anne* would jump this amount tenfold and more despite the stingy royalties paid her by American publisher L. C. Page. The Green Gables book made Maud a small fortune so that by February 1921 she figured she had made a hundred thousand dollars from her writings to date. "It's a pity it doesn't mean happiness," she wrote. As early as February 1910, with a royalty check for $7,000 in hand (thanks to *Anne*), she complained to her journal of fatigue, loss of energy, headaches, and "nerves."

Maud Montgomery described herself as a rather pretty woman, not tall, vivacious, with a small mouth she wished were larger and a figure she thought was "neat," though in her forties she admitted to putting on weight. During her pre-Anne years, Maud's vibrant personality attracted many male admirers. She received at least four proposals of marriage, accepted second cousin Edwin Simpson's offer but immediately regretted it. The poor fellow's kisses left her totally unmoved. A handsome young Bedeque farmer offered stronger wine. More than a dozen pages of Maud's published journals are given over to descriptions of her feverish attraction to Herman. Apparently well aware that others beside herself would read her confidences, the love passages recall the style of the romance novels she would make fun of in later life, though she never wholly freed herself from their influence:

> Herman suddenly bent his head and his lips touched my face. I cannot tell what possessed me—I seemed swayed by a power utterly beyond my control—I turned my head—our lips met in one long passionate pressure—a kiss of fire and rapture such as I had never in all my life experienced or imagined. Ed's [Simpson's] kisses at the best left me cold as ice—*Herman's* sent flame through every fiber of my being.

But Puritan Macneil conscience won out over passionate Montgomery blood. She told Herman to go—and he went, dying unexpectedly about a year later of complications following an influenza attack. More than twenty years after she last saw him, she wrote in her journal and recalled her early reading of Olive Schreiner's *The Story of an African Farm,* particularly the author's taxonomy of love; it included a love without wisdom, sweet as life, bitter as death, lasting for an hour. *"But it is worth having lived a whole life for*

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that hour." Maud claims to have known such love:

> My own love for Herman Leard, though so incomplete, is . . . a memory which I would not barter for anything save the lives of my children and the return of Frede [Frederica Campbell Macfarlane, cousin and best friend].

She does not include her own husband Ewan MacDonald, to whom, at the time of this journal entry, she had been married nine years.

Why Maud Montgomery married her Presbyterian minister remains something of a mystery. Marry him she did on July 5, 1911, leaving behind her beloved Prince Edward Island to join him at Leaskdale, Ontario, where the manse boasted neither bathroom nor toilet. Their pre-*Anne* engagement (1906) had been kept a virtual secret because of Maud's commitment to live with her aging grandmother. To judge by photos of the couple on the wedding trip to Scotland and England, Ewan had all the look of a Calvinist dominie, black-clad, erect, his smile as stiff as his walking stick. To her journal Maud confided, "I would not want him for a lover but I hope at first that I might find a friend in him." He was not very bright, had no interest in art or literature; Maud's nature-ecstasies were beyond him.

As early as 1907 Maud believed that something serious was the matter with her husband. They had two children, Chester and Stuart—a child, "Little Hugh," of the second pregnancy was still-born. Perhaps Maud, already troubled by nervous mood changes, owing in part to trying to satisfy her publisher with more Anne books, counted on her husband to help her make the quiet, restful home that was her domestic ideal. But Ewan had his own mood swings; his growing religious melancholia would be of no help to her. Yet Maud—"Mrs. MacDonald" as she was called by her awed congregation—stood determined to be the perfect minister's wife, though she wrote to her Scottish correspondent that whom the gods would destroy they first make minister's wives. Maud pleased Leaskdale folk, earning their admiration for the way she carried out the multiple duties of her job. The small congregation did not expect but were delighted to be treated with friendly informality by a writer already famous.

Maud's personal religious beliefs were not those of her husband or even those of Anne Shirley, though she sympathized with the small redhead's idea of prayer. To Anne true prayer meant going into deep woods and looking up into a lovely blue sky: "And then I'd just feel a prayer." After Montgomery's death in 1942, her son, Dr. Stuart MacDonald of Toronto, made a comment cited by Gillen:

> She was very religious, although in a rather rigid way, and although in her writings she gave the impression of broad tolerance of human weaknesses, she did not condone any such elasticity in herself or in her family. I think she derived comfort and strength from her religion, but it was a rather bleak and forbidding one.

When she was forty-five, Maud's private theology was still romantically Zoroastrian: "I believe in a God who is good but not omnipotent. I also believe in a Principle of Evil, equal to God in power . . . opposing evil to his Good . . . darkness to His light. I believe that an infinite ceaseless struggle goes on between them."

Montgomery's creed of theological dualism owed much to the remembered horrors of the First World War during which she identified herself with the Allied cause to an almost manic degree. News of even the smallest Allied victory became cause for celebration; she ran up the flag for the Russians' capture of Trebizond. The rape of Belgium was no more God's will than "Little Hugh's" being born dead, for from God only good things come. Nor was her husband particularly comforting; he refused to talk about the war because "it unsettles him and he cannot do his work properly."

The conflict's end found Montgomery emotionally and physically exhausted. A ten-day struggle with influenza left her in poor condition after the strain of her *annus horribilis*, 1919. Her cousin and best friend Frede had died of the flu, a terrible wrench for Maud who had rushed to her hospital bedside from Boston where she had received a check for twenty thousand dollars in settlement for her suit against L. C. Page for underpayment of royalties and unauthorized

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publication of a batch of Maud's old short stories under the title *Further Chronicles of Avonlea.* One whole day was spent in Boston wrangling with lawyers at L. C. Page over the exact color of Anne's hair and the precise meaning of "Titian." The suit lasted nine years, and Maud calculated that after her expenses she had netted only three thousand dollars.

Over the years Ewan's condition worsened. He could still give his sermons on Sundays, but at home he would sit for hours staring at emptiness, convinced that he was damned; he told Maud that he wished their children had never been born. He insisted on driving his car all over the road; this led to the first of a series of incidents that alienated him from proposals of Presbyterian union with other Protestant denominations (the driver of the other car was a Methodist Sunday school superintendent), and to move with Maud in 1926 to Norval, Ontario, to serve a non-United congregation. Through the twenties Maud suffered increasingly from depressive spells and headaches (migraine?), which she believed were the result of suppressed passion dating back to the Bedeque days and the ghost of Herman Leard. Meanwhile, urged by readers and publisher alike, she soldiered on with her book writing.

In her nerve-tormented life, Maud Montgomery published twenty books in all, eight of them Anne stories. The first Green Gables sequel, *Anne of Avonlea,* Maud got ready so quickly that the book could have been published in the same year as the first *Anne,* but Page held it up until 1909. In *Avonlea,* Montgomery deals with the problem of Anne at age eighteen, teaching school near her old home, by introducing a device she was to use in the follow-on sequels—deploying new characters, serious or comic, to make stories within a story. She had worked this technique in her early work *The Story Girl* of 1911, a sans-Anne book that she says she wrote for the love of it and the last she would finish at her old home in PEI.

Anne of the Island (1915) makes a bridge between an occasionally kitschy Anne striking at last for her B.A. at Redmond (Dalhousie) and Anne marrying Gilbert Blythe in *Anne's House of Dreams* (1917), Maud's first book to be published by Frederick Stokes of New York. In her twenties now and wife of Doctor Blythe, Anne lovingly withdraws from center stage to let the influence of new kindred spirits play upon her life. There is Leslie Moore, for one, whose defunct marriage imprisons her within her own beauty, and, adding a salty note, old Captain Jim works on his personal logbook that will be published posthumously through the care of Anne and Gilbert.

Anne moves further into the background in *Rainbow Valley* (1919) and *Rilla of Ingleside* (1921), both books about Anne's children and their friends growing up. Anne has six children, the youngest, Rilla, named after Marilla Cuthbert of Green Gables now gone to her well-deserved reward. *Rainbow Valley* is set in the years before the Great War, but the conflict between the Manichean forces of light and those of the darkness to come makes its presence felt in the fight between son Walter and the local bully who insults Walter's friend Faith and his mother Anne as well.

Rilla of Ingleside brings the effect of time and the war itself on the peaceful hamlet where the children and their friends, now grown, must live through the war at the front or at home. Walter dies in battle while his older brother Jem—Anne's firstborn—survives the madness. While Gilbert does medical work and Anne runs the local Red Cross chapter, young Rilla does her bit—the leitmotif of orphan and home sounds once again by Rilla taking on a moribund, parentless infant, nursing it back to health, and bringing it up by herself. A constant lighthouse, carried forward from the Four Winds house of dreams, signals that out of death comes life.

In late August 1920, Montgomery wrote to MacMillan in Scotland that Rilla was positively the last of the Anne series and that she needed a new heroine. "I am sick of her [Anne]," she wrote, "and I wonder if the public isn't too." She found her new heroine in *Emily of New Moon* (1923), drawing in large part on her own development as an aspiring young writer. Writing the first Emily book was fun, but Maud lost her enthusiasm when writing the two sequels, *Emily Climbs* (1925) and *Emily's Quest* (1927). She felt it easier to write about growing girls than about young women, she said; besides, she didn't feel like marrying off Emily.

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Despite her avowal to have nothing more to do with Anne, Montgomery returned to her in the last decade of her life with two more books—*Anne of Windy Poplars* (1936) and *Anne of Ingleside* (1939), the latter the last book Montgomery marketed before her death. Pressure from publishers and from RKO film- rights moguls, plus Maud's own curiosity to see if she still had the old magic, all gave a nudge to the aging writer's elbow for a last time around. *Windy Poplars* returns to Anne's years as teacher, this time as principal of PEI's Summerside High School, time out to write long letters to Gilbert Blythe now studying medicine at Dalhousie—the love parts of the letters discreetly omitted by the narrator. The last novel, *Anne of Ingleside,* returns to Anne and her children as little ones—they love their mother strenuously. Freud's shadow appears but for a moment. Anne has read about the Jocasta complex in a medical journal but dismissed with pity one Dr. V. A. Tomachevsky's warning to mothers about kissing their small sons. A man of course! "No woman would ever write anything so silly and wicked," she wrote. Much of *Anne of Ingleside* runs to a turning out of old Avonlea memories with best friend Diana, herself a mother and now grown matronly. Clouds darken when Gilbert's strange behavior leads Anne to suspect that he doesn't love her anymore, but the misunderstanding is happily resolved near the end of this late domestic romance—Dr. Blythe was preoccupied with a patient's life-and-death medical problem he had correctly diagnosed. Gilbert receives his wedding anniversary present from Anne—happy, all doubts removed.

Montgomery completed seven books between 1921 and 1931, with her main effort applied to the Emily chronicles. *The Blue Castle* (1926) appeared shortly after Maud and her husband moved to their new congregation at Norval. Set in Muskoka, Ontario, *Castle* remains Maud's only novel without a PEI background, as well as the first of two books (the other is *A Tangled Web* of 1931) aimed primarily at adult readership. The author closed out the twenties with *Magic of Marigold* (1929) before turning to the two last Anne books of 1936 and 1939. She tried out a new heroine in *Pat of Silverbush* (1933) and its sequel, *Mistress Pat* (1935). Her last non-Anne heroine, Victoria Jane Stuart, projects once again her home-seeking appeal, tinged with sadness, in *Jane of Lantern Hill* (1937).

In 1934 Maud's ailing husband signed himself into a Guelph sanatorium to deal with his headaches and insomnia. A blocked bowel condition was relieved, only to be followed by Maud's feeding him a "blue pill"—a mistake made by the drug store—that contained an insect killer laced with strychnine and bichloride of mercury. Ewan survived the near-mortal dose, but his general condition made it clear that he should plan for retirement from the ministry; this took effect in 1935.

Maud was cheered up that same year by the award of the Order of the British Empire conferred on her by the Governor General of Canada. The following year she paid a bittersweet visit of honor to Cavendish, the site the Canadian government had chosen as the center of PEI's national park. Maud enjoyed RKO's film version of *Anne of Green Gables*—she saw it four times in 1936; she liked the young star who changed her name on the strength of the film's success from Dawn O'Day to Anne Shirley. By 1936 Maud and Ewan had moved from Norval to Toronto, their house named "Journey's End." During the late thirties, she became increasingly upset by Hitler's threat to Europe and the world. The Wehrmacht's crushing blow against Poland and the follow-on 1940 invasion of France and the Low Countries threw the emaciated writer into a state of collapse—"this nightmare that has been loosed on the world . . . unfair that we should have to go through it again."

Struck by yet another nervous breakdown, another bout of influenza, a bad fall, and fear for her sons being drafted into the trenches, Maud's ending—like Prospero's—was despair. To her faithful correspondents Weber and MacMillan she wrote notes of farewell. Her last to MacMillan, in Bolger and Epperly's book of her letters to him, is dated December 28, 1941.

---This past year has been one of constant blows to me. My oldest son has made a mess of his life and his wife has left him. My husband's nerves are worse than mine even. I have kept the nature of his attacks from you for over 20 years but they

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have broken me at last. . . . I could not go out to select a book for you this year. Pardon me. I could not even write this if I had not had a hypodermic. The war situation kills me along with many other things. I expect conscription will come in and they will take my second son and then will give up all effort to recover because I shall have nothing to live for.

Maud Montgomery died April 24, 1942. She is buried in Cavendish. Her husband survived her by less than two years. In clinical terms, the cause or causes of Maud's death are as yet unclear. An earlier ignorant age would have said that she died of a broken heart.

The Green Gables story ends with Anne sitting by her window at night, happy in her new found friendship with former foe and rival Gilbert Blythe, content with her sacrifice of her scholarship to Redmond. It will turn out all right in another book, but for the moment the narrator is sure that the flower of quiet happiness will bloom along Anne's now-narrowed path. She has the last word, silk-spinning Pippa's "God's in his heaven—all's right with the world." Anne had not read Walt Whitman, though with her small cosmic optimism she might have been drawn to him as a kindred spirit. Would she have heeded his warning:

> Have you no thought O dreamer that it may be all maya, illusion?

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Cleanth Brooks Remembered

JAMES GOLLIN

"I want to warn you, you're in the hands of the monster now." These words, delivered in the gentlest of border-state accents, were the first I ever heard Cleanth Brooks utter. The year was 1951, the setting was a Yale College classroom. I was a junior, and this was the opening session of Brooks's class in modern poetry.

Even to a junior, it was no secret that Brooks's approach to literary study was controversial. Thirteen years had gone by since his and Robert Penn Warren's *Understanding Poetry* had appeared. Brooks's own *Modern Poetry and the Tradition* had come out in 1939, and his *Well Wrought Urn* in 1947. Friends and foes alike had had plenty of time to wage war over readings that stressed tradition over literary history, the complexities of poetic structure over supposed moral or social message, absolute standards of merit over personal or historical relativism, and the importance of poetry as poetry.

A few of us in the class were at least somewhat aware that, in coming to Yale, Brooks was carrying the banner of the New Criticism into one of the strongholds of linguistic, historical, and biographical literary study. The young adore bravery. To undergraduates just beginning to be besotted with literature, the notion was deliciously brave that what you needed to understand literature—in particular *our* literature, modern literature—was not deep scholarly knowledge but simply the ability to read.

Accordingly, we were ready to greet Brooks's self-deprecatory remark with knowing smiles. We *wanted* to be in the hands of the New Critical monster. We dreamed of being monsters ourselves one day.

So imagine our chagrin when the first poem Cleanth Brooks assigned us was not Eliot, not Yeats, not even Robert Frost, but "The Convergence of the Twain" by Thomas Hardy. Hardy! We'd suffered through *Far From the Madding Crowd* and *Tess* in high school. How could Brooks claim that "The Convergence of the Twain" was modern? It rhymed. It was allegorical. It spoke of "the Pride of Life," "the Immanent Will" and "the Spinner of the Years." What could be ironical or paradoxical about such simple personifications?

Those first weeks, we read not only Hardy but Hopkins, Housman, and Edwin Arlington Robinson, and I'm not sure Brooks didn't assign some of the "Testament of Beauty" as well.

We tried to understand. Like puppies scuffling in a basket, we vied with one another to see who could produce the most convoluted, most symbol-laden interpretations. Brooks listened to our efforts with unfailing courtesy. The papers we wrote almost always came back with absurdly high grades on them. Only rarely did Brooks intervene in our classroom battles. When he did, it was always with disarming mildness. "Mr. So-and-So," he would say to some flushed symbol-hunting enthusiast, "I hate to disagree with you head-on." Most often, he would turn to another member of the class for a rejoinder, but on occasion he would proffer, gently but with a certain steely decisiveness, his own view of the matter.

From all of this, of course, we learned the first and most valuable lesson a baby critic can learn, that no matter how hard you pull at and maul a good poem (or any other good work of art) in search of meaning, it will snap back and reassert its integrity. But we were also be-

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ing shepherded toward the humbling truth that *real* critical reading demanded such "extraneous" skills as a knowledge of prosody, a familiarity with genres and influences—and thus of literary history—and even a willingness to delve at need into literary biography. I can still recall my sense of shock at Brooks's insistence, at the time vociferously and vainly contested by me, that a full understanding of "Sailing To Byzantium" and "A Second Coming" was impossible without reference to *A Vision.*

To the end of his days, Brooks would have to insist that the formalist criticism he espoused never was, and was never meant to be, a methodology innocent of learning and independent of context. Those of us who were his students knew better all along. He shared with us his visceral belief that the more you bring to the poem or novel or play, the more you take away. It came as no surprise to us when we learned, toward the end of that first course, that Brooks's Oxford dissertation had been a study in linguistics.

Nor in Brooks's hands was criticism a remote, abstract endeavor divorced from practical reality. One chilly day in February or March of 1955, I ran into him in the courtyard of the Yale residential college in which he had his office. He was almost chortling. "I've just read the proofs of Red Warren's new novel," he told me. I was awestruck. This was what it meant to be friends with real writers. He went on: "It's about a young woman student at Oberlin who suddenly finds she's not white but Negro and is kidnapped and sold into slavery."

I summoned up all the austere moral authority of my twenty-three years. "Isn't that kind of sensationalistic?"

Cleanth Brooks was incapable of giving me the answer I deserved. Instead, he said thoughtfully, "Well, I suppose you're right." And he immediately added in a pleased drawl, "But one thing about it . . . it'll sell like hell!"

Band of Angels, the novel in question, did sell like hell.

From the start, Brooks's critical adversaries charged him (and other New Critics) with "stacking the deck" against eighteenth-century poetry, Romantic poetry, long poems, novels, plays, and, indeed, all of literature other than brief lyric poems, metaphysical and modern. *The Well Wrought Urn* was an early and effective response to this charge, but Brooks always remained sensitive to the charge. Could methods that worked well applied to "The Canonization" and "Among School Children" work equally well applied to, say, "Resolution and Independence" and *Dubliners*? Brooks was certain that they could. This feeling—more, I think, than defensiveness—was what led him in the mid-1950s and after to offer his graduate seminars in Romantic poetry (specifically Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Keats) and in the fiction of Hemingway, Joyce, and Faulkner.

I took both courses during my two not very successful years as a graduate student (1954–56), enjoying them a good deal more than a graduate student is supposed to enjoy anything. But my cup really did run over when Brooks asked me if I "could possibly spare the time" to grade the papers of the students in his undergraduate poetry course. Those poor miserable wretches! I fell on their offerings with the zeal of a true believer. I scribbled endless comments in their margins. I graded savagely, always of course in the interest of bringing a healthy discipline to bear on their budding critical faculties.

As I handed over each batch of papers—there were something like forty papers a week—Brooks would glance at them, smilingly cross out my grades, and without saying a word, write in his own more generous ones.

II

Any serious appraisal of Cleanth Brooks's thought and teaching must come to grips with two bedrock elements of the private man's character, his devout Christianity and his being of and from the South.

Brooks's father was a Methodist minister. Brooks himself, an Episcopalian who served for years as senior warden of his parish, belonged to perhaps the last generation of American humanist scholars of which the members could or would openly profess their religious beliefs and make no bones about how these beliefs shaped their views.

Brooks loved his time away at Oxford as a Rhodes Scholar. Leaving the South in 1947, he lived and worked mostly in Connecticut for the next forty-seven years. But he never forgot what it meant to be born in Murray, county seat of Calloway County in western Kentucky,

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and to grow up in southern Tennessee "some fifty miles north of [William] Faulkner's hometown early in the century." He spoke with pride of the virtues of the Southern schooling of his day: it was his boast that his high school, the McTyeire School in tiny McKenzie, Tennessee, could offer him four years of Latin and four years of Greek. He was almost as proud of his prowess as an end on the McTyeire School football team. But he was proudest of all to be a part of the star-spangled literary confederacy that included John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, Donald Davidson, John Peale Bishop, Caroline Gordon, Katherine Anne Porter, Robert Penn Warren, Faulkner himself, and, latterly, James Dickey, Randall Jarrell, Peter Taylor, Eudora Welty, and Walker Percy.

Even so, Christianity and regionalism, important as they were, make themselves felt obliquely and indirectly in Brooks's work. Only when Brooks goes beyond explication and allows us to glimpse the man behind the decorous, disciplined critic's mask, do we realize how haunted he was by what he could see only as the decay of faith and the painful lessons of contemporary history.

For the Christian, of course, man is fallen man. But modern man, Brooks often seems to be saying in his measured, cheerful prose, is worse than fallen. Denied Eden but given a beautiful and fruitful home on earth, he is despoiling and fouling it with fearsome speed and at the same time cutting himself off from it. Offered redemption through Christ, contemporary man perversely rejects redemption in favor of a violent, alienated, and hopeless earthly existence. Given the freedom to choose good over evil, he seems to jump at the chance to do evil. Human history is a downhill slope, and we today are tottering precariously upon its lowest reaches.

A few examples will help make the point.

In a 1965 essay on T. S. Eliot, Brooks interrupts his analysis to say in so many words that Eliot's bleak vignettes of urban life in *The Waste Land* and elsewhere are neither sociological "arguments" nor "sermonizing," nor yet poetical fantasies, but rather "presentations of reality," instances of "modern man's loss of meaning and purpose."

Another look behind the mask is vouchsafed, I think, in Brooks's study of Faulkner's early novel *Pylon*. Not only Faulkner but Brooks himself sees the airplane in the novel as the prime symbol of "rootlessness"; and he finds in the plane, in the automobile, and even in "the food at a short-order joint" instances of "the dehumanizing aspects of modern civilization: the lack of community, the dullness and uniformity, the exploitation of human beings."

In a rare outburst of overt moralizing, Brooks could even declare of James Joyce's Gerty MacDowell, daydreaming on the beach about Leopold Bloom in *Ulysses*, that "this tawdry little butterfly" has a "little corrupted soul. Her mind—or what passes for her mind—is made up of stereotypes from the cheaper fashion magazines, third-rate fiction, and the nasty-niceness of a sentimental art." More ominously, Dublin, "the city through which Stephen [Dedalus] and Leopold Bloom walk is a community falling to pieces, a world ending not with a bang but a whimper."

Both the clearest example and the worst symptom of our post-lapsarian state, Brooks insists repeatedly, is the parlous condition of literature itself. "An industrial civilization," he wrote in *The Hidden God* (1963)

> has undertaken the mass production of entertainment to fill up the leisure which it has created. And whereas there is much to be said for the mass production of refrigerators or automobiles, there is very little to be said for the mass production of art. . . . The worker on the mass-production line that is turning out prefabricated entertainment . . . gives nothing and means to give nothing. Rather, he hopes to play upon the stock emotions and stereotyped attitudes already present in the minds of his audience . . . giving the reader or the auditor the illusion of something new but actually making sure that he never departs from the limits of the sure-fire stereotypes.

William Wordsworth, Brooks noted in the same essay,

> in 1800 claimed that the imagination was being strangled by the more sensational popular arts. . . . I think that . . . the pressure of the popular arts today as exerted through cheap fiction, Tin Pan Alley, the movies, the radio, and now television makes what Wordsworth faced in 1800 seem very mild indeed.

Despite all of this, however, "our modern

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literature represents a great achievement—the more triumphant because it has been made under the very worst of conditions." And therefore, "a Christian looking at modern literature ought to find a great deal that is heartening and hopeful."

Yet—and this I find of compelling interest—Cleanth Brooks the Christian, at once despairing and optimistic about the world as a Christian must be, strongly and expressly rejects the imposition of Christian ideas and Christian values upon literature.

I may be wrong, but I cannot imagine Brooks's saying with his friend and brilliant fellow critic, the late William K. Wimsatt, that "The greatest poems for the Christian will never be . . . the great though immoral. . . . *Antony and Cleopatra* will not be so great as *King Lear*." What Brooks does say, indeed, is strikingly different.

> One looks [in literature] for an image of man, attempting in a world increasingly dehumanized to realize himself as a man—to act like a responsible moral being, not to drift like a mere thing.

One looks, that is, for moral issues and the human response to them. But, Brooks adds at once,

> Some of our literature that is most significant for the Christian reader has been written by authors who are not members of any church and by some who frankly put themselves down as agnostics or atheists. If we demand of our serious literature that it make overt preachments of Christianity, we shall certainly exclude some of the most spiritually nourishing literature of our time. But I shall press this warning further still. If we read such Christian writers as T. S. Eliot or W. H. Auden merely for the sake of the overt preachments that their works may be felt to make, we shall probably miss their significance as Christian artists. For if we cannot apprehend their art, we have lost the element that makes their work significant to us; they might as well be journalists or pamphleteers.

Literature, in a word, is sovereign in its own realm.

Some literary folk may have found it surprising or troubling (a few may have felt gleeful pleasure) to discover that Cleanth Brooks, champion of "close analysis," of a criticism tightly focused on text and structure, thought it necessary late in his career to worry about "context": to insist in print that there is such a thing as a "real" South to be sought outside the pages of Southern literature and that the reality must be understood if the literature is to be understood.

Brooks wasted very little time on the moonlight-and-magnolias myth of the South. Nowhere in his writings do I find a reference to *Gone With the Wind*, although in *The Yoknapatawpha Country* (1963), the first of his two books on Faulkner, he equates "magnolias and Greek-revival porticoes" with the "shamrocks, pepper pots made in the shape of Irish round towers, harps, and books with green covers" of sentimental Irish symbology.

Brooks had more to say about the obverse or Dogpatch version of the myth, that in which poor whites are "represented as being in general . . . shiftless, illiterate, and often vicious." This version, he acknowledges ruefully, is "perennially attractive," thanks largely to "Erskine Caldwell's *Tobacco Road* and *God's Little Acre* and similar tales sold in paperback volumes in drugstores throughout the land." Foolish as it was, it at least had its roots in comic folk tradition.

But both versions of the myth are dangerously wide of the reality; and a knowledge of the reality, Brooks came to feel, was crucially important. Without it, readers—including many scholars—were simply shooting from the hip in their interpretations of Southern poetry and fiction.

So repeatedly, but in particular in his books on Faulkner, we find Brooks urging his readers to read Southern social history and sociology along with Faulkner and Tate and Welty and Warren.

Much of what Brooks found so nourishing in the real life of the South he summarized neatly in a 1962 essay, later reprinted in the collection *A Shaping Joy*:

> (1) the concreteness of human relationships including the concreteness of moral problems; (2) the conflict and tension which everywhere confront one in the Southern scene and which, because they are conflict and tension, make for drama; (3) the pervading sense of community; (4) the sense of religious wholeness—I dare say that the South is the last part of the country which still believes instinctively in the supernatural; (5) the belief that human nature is mys-

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terious and relatively intractable, and that it is not a kind of social putty which can be shaped as the politician or the social scientist may be tempted to shape it; and (6) a sense of the tragic dimension of life.

Brooks saw regionalism as endowing the regional writer with specificity and particularity. Carry particularity too far, he warned, and you produce only local color, which Brooks dismissed as "exploiting the oddities of a provincial scene for the titillation and amusement of a condescending 'outside' world." Nevertheless, the small details of a region's social, cultural, economic, and religious life are precisely the metaphoric raw materials from which a writer, if he has the skills, can create something akin to William Wimsatt's "concrete universal." Thus, Faulkner's Flem Snopes becomes both an amoral, greedy North Mississippi wheeler-dealer and "a sinister deformation of universal human nature and a terrifying version of appetitive man, modern style."

The South, of course, holds no monopoly on the above catalogue of traits and beliefs. Brooks repeatedly pointed to other regions and regional cultures, from Frost's New England to Yeats's Ireland to Hardy's Wessex, as offering its native writers the same kind of sustenance. Nor did Brooks ever negate or dismiss the darker aspects of regionalism: the resistance to ideas, the mistrust of outsiders, the truckling to established authority, the pessimism, the bigotry, the violence. On the contrary, he felt of regional writers everywhere that they had a special opportunity (and responsibility) to come to grips with the ugliness and evil of their native ground.

What Brooks sometimes did do, I think, is overstate the case. Thus, he wrote in 1962 that "our most authentic literature has been coming from the province [and] a literature rooted in a regional culture stands out in sharp contrast to the rootless urban civilization." In the same essay, he even went so far as to assert without qualification that on Manhattan's East Side "the community, at least in Faulkner's sense, does not exist."

I think I'd have to disagree head-on that city dwellers are quite as "rootless" and "dehumanized" as Brooks said they were; or that it is a specifically urban culture that the great regional writers from Hardy to Faulkner are criticizing; or, indeed, that "criticizing" is what they are up to in the first place. But then, I have my doubts that Brooks himself meant every word he said about poor rootless old Manhattan: I suspect that this least dogmatic of critics would smile today at the uncharacteristic dogmatism of his remark. But what Brooks most treasured about the South, the "real" South as well as the fictional, was that it gave him no less than other Southern writers a place to take his stand.

Carver Blanchard, Brooks's nephew, painted me a revealing picture of his uncle, not as the polished gentleman scholar but as a young man back from Oxford during the Depression, teaching at Louisiana State University in Baton Rouge, living in "a little nothing kind of a house on Morning Glory Road," correcting papers, editing and writing in the blistering Gulf Coast summer heat, and supporting his wife and his parents on his $2,000 a year salary because "that was what you did, you took care of family."

In the second of his Faulkner volumes, Brooks quoted Sherwood Anderson's celebrated advice to the young Faulkner as the latter recalled it years later:

> You have to have somewhere to start from: then you begin to learn. It don't matter where it was, just so you remember it and aint ashamed of it. Because one place to start from is just as important as any other. You're a country boy: all you know is that little patch up there in Mississippi where you started from.

In some part of his being, in quite a large part, Cleanth Brooks himself was always a country boy.

III

Asked what single thing about Brooks was most memorable, Maynard Mack, Brooks's Yale colleague for twenty-eight years and his friend for nearly fifty, said at once: "His love of talk." Mack's observation was echoed by almost everyone. "Not just talk," his nephew Carver Blanchard commented. "Cleanth often said that what he loved best about England was that there was always so much *good* talk." In 1963, when he brought out *The Hidden God*, his reply to my congratulatory note ended with: "Do you ever come up to New Haven?

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It would be nice to have some talk again."

Brooks's love of talk is only a special case of something wider. By definition, writers and teachers of literature love language. But Brooks loved it with a passion and defended it fiercely from its many foes. He rejoices in the storytelling virtuosity of Faulkner's V. K. Ratliff, some of whose tales "achieve the dimension of myth." He repeatedly deplores the deadening effect of cliché and stereotype and "odds and ends of rhetorical junk" on the mind. "One can agree with [the man in the street]," he observes sadly, "that language can be . . . misused by advertising agencies, public relations men, fraudulent politicians, and just plain liars." Echoing Pound and Eliot, Brooks insists that "one of the uses of literature is to keep our language alive—to keep the blood circulating through the tissues of the body politic. There can scarcely be a more vital function."

But for Brooks, there was one yet more vital. Of the several incidents he discusses in a 1981 AMERICAN SCHOLAR essay on the governance of his beloved Episcopal Church, the issue of which he writes with real anguish is the decision to introduce a revision of *The Book of Common Prayer*, a wonderwork of the English language for four hundred years.

IV

After I left graduate school (carrying with me what the English Department rather bleakly described as a "terminal M.A."), my contacts with Cleanth Brooks became sporadic. As noted, I wrote to him in 1963, and wrote again when each of the volumes of his study of Faulkner appeared; I still have a couple of his replies.

In 1964—in its modest way it was one of the Kennedy administration's most inspired appointments—Brooks was asked to serve as cultural attaché at the U. S. embassy in London. A letter to him there in 1965 produced an invitation to my parents, traveling in England, to meet him at the embassy for tea.

From time to time he and I would catch up on each other's doings at functions in New Haven. In 1980, to my enormous if somewhat uneasy pleasure, my son signed up for (and fared well in) his course in contemporary poetry. Later, in the haphazard way one hears such things, I learned that Brooks had sold the home he loved in the Connecticut village of Northford. (The house he moved into in New Haven had both a Greek Revival portico and magnolias flanking the front door.)

At one of our encounters, he mentioned with typical understatement that he was "having some trouble with his eyesight." In fact, glaucoma was threatening to blind him: mercifully, cataract surgery in 1988 partly restored his vision and enabled him to read easily again.

In 1986, Tinkum, his "*coniuga dilectissima*" of fifty-two years, died. Tinkum (no one called her Edith) had always been one of her husband's two closest literary advisors, the other being Robert Penn Warren. (I am told that a detailed account of Brooks's lifelong friendship and collaboration with Warren will figure in Joseph Blotner's forthcoming biography of Warren.) It may have been Tinkum's example—when she and Brooks met, she was an honors student at Tulane's Sophie Newcomb College—but Brooks always took women scholars and writers with the utmost seriousness.

One more story about this man who loved storytelling will provide proof; and in any event I can't resist telling it. Today, Patricia Sheppard is a federal immigration judge in Boston. But in 1969, Sheppard was twenty-three, married to a Yale graduate student, and the mother of a one-year-old daughter. Too poor to afford the official audit fee, she won Brooks's permission to "sit in the back of the room" and later to write the papers for his undergraduate class in modern poetry.

"You do good work," he eventually told her. "They're taking women here now. Why don't you come to Yale?"

As a matriculated student, Sheppard knew she would qualify for financial aid. But what about her duty to her daughter?

"Well," Brooks replied without the trace of a smile, "in Plato's republic, both men and women were educated, and the children were raised by the state. Of course, Plato's republic is a utopia, and in real life you need to be careful about who will look after your daughter. But I'm sure you're a good and responsible mother who will be careful."

"Imagine being told about day care from Plato's *Republic*," Sheppard said to me, recounting the story. "But I did apply to Yale and he helped get me in. And taught me to

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read. And to think. And to carry on my own love affair with poetry." (Sheppard's poetry has appeared in the *Hudson Review,* the *Iowa Review,* and the *Antioch Review.*)

My last encounter with Cleanth Brooks came at the end of January 1994, at a New Haven restaurant. Each of us was awaiting a lunch guest. I saw that Brooks was using a cane, and he remarked that the winter had been especially hard, but that he was looking forward to a trip to England to lecture. After some desultory chat, I asked him about deconstructionism, which had enjoyed a considerable vogue at Yale. He did not speak in anger—far from it—but his reply was devastating. "It's so sad," Brooks said. "They don't know *literature.* They don't care about literature. They're not teaching literature. They're teaching politics, they're teaching social theory, they're teaching a sort of history. Of course they can teach whatever they want. But they shouldn't call it literature."

Cleanth Brooks gave his whole life to literature. All I could think to say to him was: "Some of us do know what literature is. You can be certain that we won't forget." What I meant, of course, was, "You taught us. That's why we know and why we won't forget." I hope and believe that he understood.

Brooks, at eighty-seven, did make the trip to England. But shortly after his return, his doctors discovered an inoperable cancer. He died at his home on Ogden Street on May 10, 1994.

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REAPPRAISAL

Edward Bellamy and the Politics of Meaning

WILFRED M. McCLAY

Since time immemorial, college survey courses in American history have been packaged as two-semester sequences, breaking at the Civil War. Although academic inertia probably has much to do with this pattern, its intellectual justification remains sound. The Civil War represents the single most dramatic watershed in American history, one full of consequence for the nation's subsequent forms of political, economic, legal, and social organization. Perhaps above all else, the Civil War marked the United States's coming-of-age as a modern nation-state, in that respect resembling the other great nineteenth-century wars of nation building, such as those in Germany and Italy.

It is less often appreciated how much the war affected the direction of American social thought. George Fredrickson argued some three decades ago that an "inner" civil war took place in the minds of American intellectuals, whose antebellum ideals of freewheeling individualism were undermined by the realities of life in an increasingly consolidated and corporate nation. One can observe this transformation most strikingly in a literary figure such as Walt Whitman. No antebellum work better exemplified the spirit of expressive individualism, radical subjectivism, and boundless aspiration than Whitman's *Leaves of Grass.* But the war caused him to channel all his personal yearnings into the collective struggle for a more perfect national union. When, at war's end, the two hundred thousand Union troops in the victorious Grand Review paraded through the streets of Washington for two full days in May, Whitman and thousands of others lined the streets to watch, awed by the combination of selfless dedication and concentrated energy, as well as the electric sense of connection to a larger whole, that the event embodied.

What enthralled Whitman and his contemporaries was something more than the terrible beauty of Mars. War symbolized the kind of disciplined and orderly collective effort that could enable a nation to overcome huge obstacles and achieve great public ends. Even in the Gilded Age, an era not known for its sacrificial ethos, powerful memories of the Civil War helped shape a fresh vision of American society as a national community, knit together by affective bonds such as those of the family, but also energized by the intelligent orchestration of human effort in large-scale combination.

Among the most compelling and influential expressions of this vision was Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward* (1888), which was an instant publishing sensation and one of the most widely read books of the nineteenth century.

Looking Backward was possibly the most successful utopian novel ever written, igniting a nationwide social-reform movement and leaving an enduring mark upon the rising generation of American intellectuals and writers, including such admirers as John Dewey, Thorstein Veblen, Charles Beard, Norman Thomas, Eugene Debs, and William Allen White. Indeed, Dewey and Beard both placed *Looking Backward* second only to Marx's *Capital* in their lists of the most influential books published since 1885. But fame is fickle, and today *Looking Backward* is left with few readers and fewer admirers. The one hundredth anniversary of its publication came and went quietly, with little attention paid it outside the circles of

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dedicated utopian-literature scholars.

Such neglect is perhaps understandable. Although *Looking Backward* provides a marvelous window onto its time, its style and plotting are undistinguished, even crude. Nor is it an especially profound or pathbreaking work of social thought; one would want to look elsewhere for better elaborated versions of a non-Marxian socialism. But that was not what Bellamy was striving for anyway. *Looking Backward* was not to be a meticulous work of social philosophy but rather a vivid work of the social imagination; and in that it succeeded, for it faithfully reflected the sentiments of its reading public in two different ways. A utopia is not only an imaginative projection of a radiant social ideal; it is also a way that a society confesses how and why it is unhappy with itself. *Looking Backward* did both of these things, coupling a futuristic model of social organization with a searing critique of the social conditions of industrial America. It also was a highly personal document, registering the discontents of its author. For Bellamy, as for Whitman, a social vision emerged out of a struggle both personally and culturally resonant, steeped in the complex legacy of the Civil War.

All of which still might justify labeling *Looking Backward* as a period piece of strictly historical interest. Yet its story, and that of its author, may also have things to teach us a century later. For one thing, it was written at a moment in American life when, as today, the air was full of lamentations about the perniciousness of American individualism, when the appeal of communitarian visions of reform was on the rise, and when immigration, ethnic strife, urban disorder, and class polarization had put issues of national cohesiveness and social obligation at the forefront of national discussion. In the radical solutions it proposed to those problems, too, *Looking Backward* forces us to think constructively about the proper sources and pitfalls of social solidarity. Not the least of these pitfalls is the danger of confusing psychological and spiritual imperatives with political ones—which is especially dangerous when it eventuates, as it did for Bellamy, in a search for the moral equivalent of a civil war.

In 1890, two years after Ticknor and Company had released the first edition of *Looking Backward*, Edward Bellamy, the once-obscure author who was now thrust to the head of the great reform movement his book had created, reflected back on his initial intentions for the book. Writing in the pages of *The Nationalist*, a journal founded to propagate the book's reform agenda, Bellamy revealed that he had begun with a different book in mind that more closely resembled the fabulistic novels and short stories he had been writing over the past fifteen years. Yet even then it had a strong quasi-military motif. In its eventually discarded first draft, *Looking Backward* began with a peacetime Grand Review: "a grand parade of a departmental division of the industrial army" on the annual "muster day," when men were mustered in or out of the "national service." Although in the end he reluctantly deleted this material from the book, since it did not fit the narrative line he settled upon, such a scene was full of the imagery that set his heart afire: it portrayed "a gala day sacred to the civic virtues," filled with "solemn pageantry" and ceremonial pomp, including the new recruits' "oath of duty," and "the review and march past of the entire body of the local industrial forces, each battalion with its appropriate insignia."

Such martial imagery was at the heart of Bellamy's vision of social organization. The modern military system, he argued in the 1890 essay, was "not merely a rhetorical analogy for a national industrial service" but "its prototype," offering three things: "a complete working model" of organization, an arsenal of "patriotic and national motives and arguments" to inspire it, and the "unanswerable demonstration of its feasibility" offered by "the actual experience of whole nations organized and manoeuvred [*sic*] as armies." Military organization, Bellamy enthused, was "the destined corner-stone of the new social order."

One might have surmised from this description that Bellamy was himself a seasoned Civil War veteran. But such was not the case. Born in 1850 in the industrializing Connecticut Valley town of Chicopee Falls, Massachusetts (near Springfield), he was a dreamy, reserved, reclusive man, full of generous sentiments but plagued by physical frailty and emotional turbulence. Much of his inner strain arose out of his intense religious sensibility. Bellamy was descended from a long line of New England clergymen, stretching back to his distinguished great-great-grandfather Joseph Bellamy, an associate of Jonathan Edwards. In ad-

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dition, Bellamy's austere and zealous mother, Maria, supervised his religious formation with unbending discipline. As he acquired characteristic Calvinist convictions about the depravity of man and his personal unworthiness, Bellamy also learned that such distress could be overcome only by escaping the prison of one's self through service to others. As the biblical adage expressed it, he who would save his life first must lose it.

But escape was possible. Though Puritan theology had given him a Calvinist's agonized conscience, it also promised the ecstatic, ineffable rapture brought by yielding to the grace of God's presence. As a youth, the excruciatingly shy and introspective Edward would rush home from school each day, his heart filled with an ardent desire "to be with God." He found his most sustaining happiness in moments of solitary prayer, when he could disengage himself from the fruitlessness of the social world and feel the hated burden of his stained selfhood lift miraculously from his heart as his soul "fused and melted in perfect union with the divine." This pattern, an essentially religious quest for the calm of a higher transpersonal reality, became the template of all Bellamy's adult thought.

That pattern emerged with clarity in Bellamy's 1873 essay "The Religion of Solidarity," which translated his youthful quest for transcendent release into terms that were both richer and more generic, less exclusively Christian. When we contemplate a beautiful landscape, Bellamy began, we find ourselves not only thrilled but filled with sadness and wistful yearning, for we wish to be part of the beauty, to enjoy a perfect communion with it. The potency of this impulse demonstrates how profoundly our inward being corresponds with that of external nature. What, then, thwarts our communion and makes us sad? It is our illusion of selfhood: our "narrow, isolated, and incommodious individuality," which is merely "a bubble on a foam-flecked ocean," and whose real significance is "so infinitesimal as to defy the imagination."

Fortunately, there is also within us "a spark of the universal life," a "second soul," which reminds us of our "solidarity with all things and all existence." Our souls are not "islands in the void," but rather "peninsulas forming one continent of life within the universe"; and the passion in us "for losing ourselves in others or for absorbing them into ourselves" is an expression of "the greatest law of solidarity." The man with a vision of the universal "stands on a plane infinitely above" the Napoleons and Caesars of the world, whose worldly stature was merely "a sort of pygmy greatness."

Indeed, it was his need to discharge his ambition in self-sacrificing service, rather than a hidden sanguinary streak in him, that had turned the youthful Bellamy's thoughts toward the profession of arms. By the time he was ten years old, he had already recorded in his journal a list of the soldierly traits of character he would need to acquire for his future military career; and a growing passion for military themes was evident in his school essays on such subjects as battlefield tactics, treason, ensigns, and great military heroes. But when he attempted at the age of seventeen to enroll at West Point, he was flatly turned down because of his recurring poor health. It was a bitter blow to his most cherished plans. Yet his fascination with things military never disappeared, for it derived from the same impulses that had drawn the young Bellamy into ecstatic prayer. Although "The Religion of Solidarity" appeared to reclassify his childhood heroes as "pygmies," in the same breath it paid tribute to "the soldierly forms of solidarity," in which the "heart melts in a happy rapture," making a soldier "impatient to throw his life away . . . as a sacrifice which he can make for his country, even as the priest rejoices in a victim for the altar of his god."

For Bellamy, war honored the noblest, most self-sacrificial, least pecuniary motives animating human beings and thereby worked to dissolve the separate self into the militant whole. Valor and solidarity merged easily, for example, in his short story "An Echo of Antietam," which told the simple tale of a small-town soldier who must leave his sweetheart to go off to fight in the Union Army. The young man, significantly named Philip King, assures his beloved Grace that no harm will befall him and that he will return in a year to marry her. Yet Grace remains inconsolable, except during her final glimpse of him, as the whole town gathered to see the regiment off. The scene was one of those military reviews that repeatedly appear in Bellamy's work:

> Presently there is a burst of martial music, and the regiment comes wheeling round the corner into

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view and fills the wide street from curb to curb with its broad front. As the blue river sweeps along, the rows of polished bayonets, rising and falling with the swinging tread of the men, are like interminable ranks of foam-crested waves rolling in upon the shore. The imposing mass, with its rhythmic movement, give the impression of a single organism. One forgets to look for the individuals in it, forgets that there are individuals. Even those who have brothers, sons, lovers there, for a moment almost forget them in the impression of a mighty whole. The mind is slow to realize that this great dragon, so terrible in its beauty, emitting light as it moves from a thousand burnished scales, with flaming crest proudly waving in the van, is but an aggregation of men singly so feeble.

Perhaps a more direct encounter with the horrors of modern war might have challenged Bellamy to reconsider this picture, which has about it more than a hint of parlor sentimentality tinged with a child's bookish quixotism—light-years removed from the tough-minded war existentialism of an Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., for whom patriotic gore was more than a song lyric. Perhaps it was precisely because he never encountered war firsthand that Bellamy saw it as a matter of Grand Reviews, of swelling hearts and stirring parades. Perhaps, too, he could think of no better way to model the social solidarity he cherished.

After his disappointment at West Point, Bellamy found it difficult to settle on a comparably aimed vocation. There was a series of dead ends: a period of independent study, a trip to Europe, an abortive foray into the practice of law, and a failed attempt to make his way as a freelance writer in New York. Finally, Bellamy retreated in 1872 to the safety of his family, in whose home he would continue to live for most of his remaining life. He took an editorial position with the nearby *Springfield Union*, while in his spare time writing fiction and delivering lyceum speeches, both of which helped him explore the thoughts that would crystallize into the 1873 "religion of solidarity." His facility as a writer developed rapidly, and by 1878 he had published a first novel, *Six to One*, followed in short order by two others. By 1884 Bellamy was devoting himself exclusively to his own writing.

The intellectual and emotional themes appearing in his writings during these incubation years were building in a remarkably steady way. Perhaps the most indicative of these early writings was the science-fiction tale "The Blindman's World" (1886), which uses many of the same literary devices Bellamy would employ in *Looking Backward*, including the central device of a bemused visitor from the "backwardness" of nineteenth-century America who stumbles onto the contours of a Martian utopia. It admiringly describes the superior character of Martians, who possess foreknowledge of their personal future, and, being wise enough to "despise the past, and never dwell upon it," are freed by their pre-vision from "the disease of memory" that so afflicts Earthlings. The Martians refer to the Earth as "the Blindman's World" because its denizens—alone among the universe's intelligent beings—are "doomed to walk backward, beholding only what has gone by, assured only of what is past and dead." Perhaps, concludes the narrator, the Martians "represent the ideal and normal type of our race, as perhaps it once was, as perhaps it may yet be again."

The psychological themes of the "religion of solidarity," then, permeated Bellamy's fiction as well: the burdensomeness of individual awareness, the intolerable weight of the past, the tortures of a too-active memory—and the relief to be found in yielding one's perpetually inadequate self to the all-absorbing embrace of the supra-personal or collective. Many of the short stories Bellamy published before *Looking Backward* were Hawthorne-like romances with plots built around characteristic narrative tricks: cases of mistaken or blurred identity, tortures of lingering guilt, time travel, dreams that became real, and realities that became dreams. And, although these early tales were often clumsily didactic, seriously deficient in their plotting and character development, they clearly point the way to *Looking Backward*, which Bellamy began to draft in 1886, the same year he completed "The Blindman's World."

This is not to minimize the importance of external events in the specific gestation of *Looking Backward*. For example, the nation's growing labor unrest, symbolized by the bloody Haymarket affair in May of 1886, undoubtedly made a powerful impression upon the former journalist as he began to write his magnum opus. Even so, it is remarkable, particularly in light of its astonishing public success, how fully *Looking Backward* continued to

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express the same psychological needs that had given rise to Bellamy's earlier, introspective writings. Hence it would be wrong merely to read *Looking Backward* as a utopian tract clumsily grafted onto a nineteenth-century sentimental romance. Bellamy may not have been an inspired literary craftsman; but he needed the novelistic format to carry freight that a treatise could never have borne.

Given the connection Bellamy made between martial valor and solidarity, it is of considerable importance that the story of *Looking Backward* opens in Boston on Decoration Day, the holiday honoring the memory of Northerners who fell in the Civil War. Julian West, the protagonist-narrator, has paid his respects at the Mount Auburn grave of his fiancée's brother, who had been killed in the war, and has returned to dine that evening with his fiancée, Edith, and her upper-crust family, the Bartletts. We soon discern that Julian is a deeply troubled man. Some of his plaints stem from the disordered state of the times, which were marked by increasing class division, accelerating social tension, and labor agitation and strikes. Not that the well-insulated Mr. West feels any sympathy for the insurgent laboring classes; indeed, at the height of his exasperation, he wishes (as Caligula wished of the Romans) that "they had but one neck that he might cut it off." He especially resents the strike-related work stoppages that have repeatedly delayed completion of his new house and have thereby postponed his marriage to the lovely Miss Edith Bartlett.

But there are clearly deeper sources for Julian's trepidation. He has been fighting a battle with chronic insomnia, regularly finding it impossible to sleep for two or more consecutive nights. To combat this problem, he built a secret sleeping chamber beneath his old house, a subterranean refuge into which "no murmur from the upper world ever penetrated," and which, because of its inaccessibility and secrecy, was also an ideal place for him to protect his valuables from theft or fire. But even with the help of this bunker-like enclosure, wherein he found himself enveloped by "the silence of the tomb," secure in the knowledge that his hoarded wealth was safe nearby, he still often found himself unable to sleep and frequently had to call on the services of a mesmerist to lull him into slumber. Julian's unease, then, stems not from a disordered world but from a disordered soul. His dark, private sleeping chamber is a figuration of the deathly grotto of the purely individual life, which cuts itself off from the "upper" world in frantic pursuit of personal peace and worldly ease.

As night falls on Decoration Day in 1887, the agitated Julian finds he must once again go to his mesmerist for relief. But after he finally drifts off to sleep, a fire apparently sweeps through his house and consumes its contents—including, it was believed, Julian himself. In fact, however, Julian survives the inferno and continues to sleep undisturbed until the year 2000. At that time he is finally discovered and is taken into the household of a Dr. Leete, who proceeds to revive him, and then introduces him to the spectacle of a drastically transformed and perfected Boston. Thereafter the book alternates between long, highly didactic discussions between Julian and the Leetes about the operating principles of this radiant new world and the melodramatic episodes in the subplot of Julian's psychological development. The latter revolves around Julian's anguish over his now-riven identity and his growing romantic attraction to Dr. Leete's daughter, who is, like his nineteenth-century fiancée, named Edith.

From the beginning, the descriptions of utopian Boston offered by the Leete family touch characteristic Bellamy themes. He never missed an opportunity to contrast the sordid spectacle of nineteenth-century selfishness and wastefulness with the lustrous twentieth-century ideals of solidarity and efficiency. That contrast is prepared by Bellamy's justly celebrated comparison of nineteenth-century American society to a "prodigious coach" in which men and women scrambled and clawed at one another for the sake of a few privileged seats on top, where they could be pulled along in airy comfort by the tightly harnessed "masses of humanity," men and women reduced to beasts of burden. Dr. Leete's discourses develop that theme: the need to overcome competitive individualism through a spirit of cooperation and combination. When the disbelieving Julian is allowed to view the new city of Boston from Dr. Leete's rooftop, he finds himself especially astonished by the orderliness and opulence of the city's streets and buildings. Yes, responded Dr. Leete, he had heard of the squalor of nineteenth-century cities, a result

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of that era's "excessive individualism," which had prevented the sustenance of any meaningful "public spirit."

The utopia of *Looking Backward* did not set out to overthrow industrialism but to humanize and purify it. Consider, for example, the labor problem that so bedeviled the world Julian had left behind. The great labor disturbances of the nineteenth century, Dr. Leete patiently explained, had merely been inevitable outgrowths of the increasing concentration of capital under a more and more consolidated industrial system. Although that system had resulted in enormous social inequities and degradation of labor, it was also productive of staggering economic efficiencies—efficiencies that made thinkable, for the first time in human history, the universal dispersion of a high level of material wealth. Thus, such a system was not to be abandoned.

The key to managing this problem lay in the very process of economic consolidation that "had been so desperately and vainly resisted" by those who yearned for pre-industrial simplicity. Consolidation was not the enemy; it was, in fact, "a process which only needed to complete its logical evolution to open a golden future to humanity." In other words, the nineteenth century's enormous pains and dislocations should be attributed, not to the forces of consolidation, but to an *unfinished* consolidation.

By the early twentieth century, however, "the evolution was completed by the final consolidation of the entire capital of the nation," whereby the governance of the nation's industry and commerce was turned over to a single syndicate representing the people and therefore devoted to pursuit of "the common interests for the common profit." Indeed, the nation itself had become "the one great business corporation . . . the one capitalist . . . the sole employer . . . the final monopoly." Perhaps most remarkable of all, this colossal transformation had occurred without pressure of violence or coercion; indeed, it had been proposed by the great corporations themselves and was readily accepted by a people who had gradually become convinced of the virtues of large-scale enterprises. The epoch of industrial consolidation, the era of trusts, found its consummation in the establishment of "The Great Trust."

In this new order, the diffuse energies of solitary selves found a home where they fused with the new social order, coalescing from an aggregation of ordinary men, singly so feeble, into a single magnificent body, a coursing river of blue. And Bellamy could not adequately describe this new order without returning, again and again, to military imagery. Once the nation had come to assume proprietorship of all industrial enterprises, a citizen's service in "the industrial army" became a universal obligation, precisely analogous to the obligation of universal military service. The industrial army follows a military organizational chart, divided into ten great departments; the chief of each division is comparable to a commander of an army corps, or a lieutenant general, with generals of separate guilds reporting to him. These ten officers form his council for the general in chief, who is the president of the United States. The president is chiefly responsible for administrative oversight of the industrial army and the Great Trust; his political duties (as well as those of the Congress) have dwindled down to few or none.

This military style of administrative bureaucracy had evidently yielded economic advances unimaginable even under the highly productive regime of nineteenth-century capitalism. Bellamy did not hesitate to define those benefits in the language and imagery of warfare. "The effectiveness of the working force of a nation, under the myriad-headed leadership of private capital," explained Dr. Leete, "as compared with that which it attains under a single head, may be likened to the military efficiency of a mob, or a horde of barbarians with a thousand petty chiefs, as compared with that of a disciplined army under one general—such a fighting machine, for example, as the German army in the time of Von Moltke." Of course, the mere achievement of such efficiencies, however remarkable, would not have been enough to satisfy Bellamy's deeper moral concerns. But these concerns, too, were answered by the reconceptualization of the nation as an army. The martial virtues of unselfish valor could now be expressed in the ordinary labors of the ordinary civilian. "Now that industry," Dr. Leete tells Julian West, "is no longer self-service, but service of the nation," it follows that "patriotism, passion for humanity, impel the worker as in your day they did the soldier. The army

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of industry is an army, not alone by virtue of its perfect organization, but by reason also of the ardor of self-devotion which animates its members."

How appropriate, then, that the social-reform ideology and movement to which *Looking Backward* gave rise adopted the name of Nationalism—even if Bellamy used that term to evade the opprobrium, as well as the unwanted emphasis upon class division and class conflict, attached to the word *socialism.* But Nationalism was more than just a prudent name; it was also an honestly descriptive one. It acknowledged the degree to which the national principle, victorious over all other contenders in the clash of the Civil War, served as the animating principle for Bellamy's social vision. The purpose of the "national party," explained Dr. Leete, "was to realize the idea of the nation with a grandeur and completeness never before conceived"; it was not to be merely "an association of men for certain merely political functions," but it was to be "a family, a vital union, a common life, a mighty heaven-touching tree whose leaves are its people, fed from its veins, and feeding it in turn." The national party sought "to raise patriotism from an instinct to a rational devotion," by making their country into "a fatherland, a father who kept the people alive and was not merely an idol for which they were expected to die."

With the book's concluding chapter, the plot suddenly takes a new turn, as Julian finds himself suddenly transported back to the nineteenth century. It appears, for the moment, that his entire experience of utopian Boston has been nothing more than a dream. Now he finds himself cursed by his glimpse of glory, for he must see the social iniquities and horrors of his native century through eyes informed by a vision of twentieth-century perfection.

Julian's journey backward thus becomes a journey through hell, in which the disparities of wealth, the shameless cynicism of advertising, the programmatic wastefulness of a capitalist economy, the disarray of industry and labor, the "debauching influence" of money and banks, and the "drawn and anxious" faces of the people in the streets overwhelm him with horror and pity. He wanders the streets of the city in a dazed, aimless, disoriented state. The only moment of comfort comes, characteristically, when he happens upon a military parade marching down Tremont Street. He responds to the sight with intense relief: "Here at last were order and reason, an exhibition of what intelligent cooperation can accomplish" through "perfect concert of action" and "organization under one control." Stumbling upon this small-scale Grand Review reminded him of his own glimpse of the New Jerusalem.

Finally Julian somehow turns up at his fiancée's house on Commonwealth Avenue and is invited to join the family and its guests for dinner. Like a sonata, Julian's tale has returned to the place where it began; but the recapitulation has shifted into an agitated minor key. After his experience in the street, he finds himself nauseated by the splendor of the Bartletts' table and by the jolly spirits of the complacent diners. Like a biblical prophet who cannot contain his disgust, he explodes into a condemnation of them for their indifference to the suffering all around them: "Do you not know that close to your doors a great multitude of men and women, flesh of your flesh, live lives that are one agony from birth to death?"

But the stunned company, far from being moved to self-examination by this reproach, becomes impatient and then angry with Julian. Finally Mr. Bartlett has him thrown out of the house. At that climactic moment, Julian awakens and discovers he has been saved: to his great joy, he finds that he is still in Dr. Leete's house. His harrowing return to the nineteenth century had been the dream; the splendor of the twentieth century was the reality. As the book concludes, a tearful Julian kneels before his beloved Edith Leete and confesses to her his unworthiness "to breathe the air of this golden century."

Bellamy's persistent religious sensibilities were especially evident in these final pages. The scene at the Bartletts resounded with biblical overtones, not the least among them being the language and symbolism of crucifixion. ("I have been in Golgotha," raves the half-mad Julian at his dinner hosts; "I have seen Humanity hanging on a cross!") But the crucifixion becomes his own, a symbolic death suffered when Mr. Bartlett casts him out of the house; being thus ostracized and forsaken becomes the price of his intercession. But blessed

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are those persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven; and Julian's passion is followed by resurrection, in the form of his awakening to the "real" world of the year 2000. His social death fulfills the dictum that one must die to world and self before entering into new life.

This logic also recalled the religion of solidarity, which proclaimed that the infinitude of the "upper world" inhabited by the "second soul" was more real than the finite realm occupied by the ego-personality. Such, too, was the superordinate reality possessed by Bellamy's cherished vision of the New Jerusalem, a consolidated social order in *this* world to which the troubled and inadequate ego could turn and yield itself wholly. Yet that last analogizing step, from "upper world" to perfected social world, was a giant one, challenging the essential meaning of the dictum about dying to the world. It was essentially the same step that would be taken by the proponents of the Social Gospel, reform-minded liberal Protestant ministers such as Washington Gladden and Walter Rauschenbusch, who argued that the redemptive mission of the Incarnation had come properly to rest in the social and economic reorganization of this world, the making of an earthly paradise.

To any apprehension that so monolithically centralized a state might be a formula for tyranny, *Looking Backward* seemed almost incredibly oblivious. At times, Bellamy's innocence seems so extreme that the modern reader can read them only with a grim smile. To readers in the late twentieth century who know the harm that such fantasies can produce in the hands of an aggrandizing state, Bellamy (and his readers) may seem laughably naive for having failed to ponder the enormous abuses to which *Looking Backward*'s prescriptions could lead.

There are two points to be made in this connection, however. First, there is the obvious fact that Bellamy's era's concerns are not ours; the passage of time has dramatically changed our aims and our fears, and it will do so again. Second, and more relevant to the present day, is the fact that the discontents of Bellamy, and perhaps those of his readers, were ultimately far more spiritual than political in character. Bellamy was not merely seeking social and economic justice in proposing the wholesale reconstitution of the social order. He was seeking answers to problems of ultimate meaning in individual lives, answers that would rescue the Julian Wests of the world from their grottoes of sleepless misery. *Looking Backward* was so wildly popular partly because it was able to trade so effectively upon the fading cultural capital of American Protestantism, even as it was transforming that capital into something new and worldly.

Such a transformation, however, may do justice to neither religion nor politics. In appealing to the idea of the nation as a great community, a great trust, or a great family, Bellamy touched a profound emotional chord in his readers, who longed to see their society transformed into a vessel of connectedness and love. Few of us are immune to such longings, and there is much to cherish in them. But there is also much to distrust. It is surely significant that Bellamy found military images, especially the idea of compulsory national service, to be more compelling figures of solidarity and sacrifice than those of family or community, which compete with the unitary state. It is perhaps a coincidence, but an irresistibly meaningful one, that Bellamy's perfect solidaritists came from the planet Mars. Bellamy's redirection of a self-sacrificial imperative toward the reform of the social order ran the risk of corrupting both religion and politics by effacing the line between them.

The desire to find meaning in life by sanctifying one's social world and the objects of one's labors should not be scorned. But it runs two risks. First, the risk of making us the self-conscious creators, rather than the discoverers, of what is sacred—a typically modern exercise in narcissism and futility. Second, the risk that, in seeking too ardently for a politics of meaning, it may lose sight of the meaning of politics. Even the founder of Bellamy's religious tradition insisted upon rendering unto Caesar what is Caesar's. There is more than one lesson in that.

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The Piano Transcriptions of Franz Liszt

JAMES F. PENROSE

Transcription occupies an important place in piano literature; from the proper perspective, every great piano work is a reduction, it is the essence, in all its greatness, which is thus reduced and the piano is the means of this operation. . . . Bach, Beethoven, Liszt, Brahms all thought there was value in transcription.

—from a letter of Ferruccio Busoni to his wife, July 1913

To play these [Schubert-Liszt] transcriptions nowadays is an offense against Schubert and a detriment to the taste of our time.

—from an article by Artur Schnabel in *The Musical Courier*, April 1928

That cheerful epigram that "no good turn goes unpunished" is no less true in music than in other fields of human achievement. In this regard, few composers can have reaped as rich a harvest of obloquy as has Franz Liszt for his piano transcriptions of symphonies by Beethoven and Berlioz, songs by Schubert and Schumann, and particularly for his operatic fantasies based on works of more than a dozen composers, including Mozart, Bellini, and Donizetti.

The eminent critic Eduard Hanslick, one of the first commanders of the many enthusiastic firing squads to have shot at Liszt, had little time for the transcriptions. J. G. Huneker thought them "obsolete." The viperish Ernest Newman (real name: William Roberts), whose biography of Liszt is something of a landmark of demonization, termed them "almost creative." Wanda Landowska shuddered at the mere thought of transcription (though she was not averse to flashing her own poetic license). Even Liszt's longtime mistress, Carolyne Sayn-Wittgenstein, considered them "puerilities." Today, lesser critical lights still sporadically snipe at the transcriptions as examples of unequaled mediocrity.

Closer examination of these opinions reveals abnormally high levels of self-serving and tendentious terms as "charlatan" and "humbug," the ipse dixit of other critics, and the weight of venerable tradition as a substitute for critical analysis. In and of itself, this is not surprising as music critics rarely display their premises. By some perverse phenomenon, though, the transcriptions have stubbornly refused to disappear beneath the huge mound of invective heaped on them and, indeed, are now enjoying something of a renaissance.

Similarly odd is the fact that many of the greatest pianists appear not to have participated in the extended Hate Week that Liszt's critics have proclaimed. These musicians not only performed the transcriptions but actually *enjoyed* doing so. When that sovereign pianist Ferruccio Busoni offered three legendary recitals of Liszt's music in Berlin around the turn of the century, the third of which was entirely devoted to the operatic fantasies, Edward Dent wrote: "It can well be imagined how horrified the Berlin critics were at programs of this type; but they seem to have enjoyed them against their will." Around the

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time of the Second World War, Egon Petri is said to have recorded the partitions of the Beethoven symphonies for the BBC. In his old age when (if critics of the transcriptions are correct) he should certainly have known better, Claudio Arrau recorded several of the Verdi-Liszt transcriptions, including the *Réminiscences de Boccanegra*, which is anything but a swinging-from-the-chandeliers warhorse. In the middle sixties, when Glenn Gould recorded the partition of the C minor symphony of Beethoven, Gould attempted to wet his critics' powder by writing highly amusing and tongue-in-cheek liner notes wherein he treated the enterprise as some madcap urge, or amusing, though admittedly bizarre, psycho-therapeutic extravagance.

Gould's efforts produced a predictable result: at least one critic thought the commentary to be well matched to the music. While much of the ill will reserved for these works is in large part due to vague and unsupported accusations of empty virtuosity, the better reason for their reputation is their unfamiliarity and extreme difficulty. Those prepared to hear the transcriptions with an open and receptive mind should not be surprised to discover some of the most wonderfully rich and exciting music ever composed for the piano.

Liszt's piano transcriptions span his entire creative life. They commence (save for juvenilia) in 1829 with the eighteen-year-old super-prodigy's somewhat farouche *Grande fantaisie sur la tyrolienne de l'opéra la fiancée* by Auber and conclude in 1885 with his last work, the sparse and enigmatic *Tarantelle* by Cui. These stylistically antipodal works bracket some 208 other transcriptions of vastly ranging style, form, color, and mood. Written over a period of fifty-six years, they are as varied as the music on which Liszt's efforts were grounded, and from which they took flight.

The practical difficulties of transcribing songs, orchestral works, and opera are due to the inherent limitations of the piano. Pianos are percussion instruments: they generate their tone when the hammers strike the strings, and, while pedaling and legato technique will soften the percussive element, that element remains ever present. Transcriber and pianist must each persuade the listener of the tonal qualities of the underlying music—be it song, string, brass, or otherwise. This is an almost impossible task, though for Liszt, the doughtiest pianist the world has ever seen, we know that it was well within his powers.

Even today, only one or two pianists have attempted the savagely difficult 1830- and 1840-era versions of works that Liszt routinely played. Moreover, there are simply too many contemporary accounts from the likes of Schumann, Mendelssohn and Chopin, Grieg and Saint-Saëns (the first three of whom were impressively parsimonious with praise), who were reduced to tears, wild uncontrollable laughter, or bug-eyed, stammering incomprehension upon hearing Liszt play.

The stupefaction index, moreover, was not calibrated on a notes-per-second basis, though Liszt was certainly second to none in that department; his effects were due to the limitless color and expressiveness of his playing. Liszt could coax effects from the piano of which others had no conception. When Charles-Valentin Alkan dedicated his *Trois Morceaux dans le genre pathétique* to Liszt, he provided no dynamic or expressive markings in the score, perhaps considering it presumptuous to instruct Liszt on interpretive matters. Anton Rubinstein, one of the few contemporary pianists to approach Liszt's mastery, refused to be compared to him, saying that "we are all children compared to Liszt." Contemporary press accounts agree: even the razor-toothed Heinrich Heine, poet and full-time grillmaster of musical reputations ("He is like a sweet fallen in the mud," said Heine about the pianist Kalkbrenner. "There is nothing wrong with it but everyone leaves it where it lies"), praised Liszt extravagantly. Carl (later Sir Charles) Hallé tells of an orchestral performance given by Liszt and Berlioz in Paris in 1836 in which Berlioz conducted the *Marche au Supplice* from the *Symphonie Fantastique*. At the conclusion of the movement, Liszt sat down and played his own partition of the work "with an effect even surpassing that of the full orchestra, and creating an indescribable furore."

Liszt's transcriptions served at least three functions. Some were written in youth as unashamed display pieces (though despite the evil reputation of the early opera fantasies, even that card-carrying anti-Lisztian Johannes Brahms admired them); some were written out of reverence for particular works and their composers to whom Liszt wished to pay homage. Many transcriptions were written because performance

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standards were not high during the first half of the nineteenth century; Liszt transcribed the Beethoven symphonies simply because he could play them better than many orchestras. In each case, Liszt sparked his own creative impulses with the works of other composers.

The catalogue of Liszt's works distinguishes among the various types of transcription. Aside from the Hungarian Rhapsodies and Marches and the four-hand and two-piano transcriptions, the *Thematisches Verzeichniss der Werke, Bearbeitungen und Transcriptionen* (Leipzig, 1877) divides the pianoforte transcriptions into four other categories. The *Arrangements* (*Bearbeitungen*) are adaptations of non-vocal works that vary in their degree of fidelity to the originals. Occasionally, as in the case of the arrangements of six organ preludes and fugues by J. S. Bach (BWV 543-548), Liszt's versions are literal reworkings of Bach's originals and show a stately and handsome weaving of the pedal line through the two hands. In other cases, such as the nine *Valses-Caprices* on themes by Schubert (the *Soirées de Vienne*), Liszt permits himself more flexibility with his materials, though never to the point where violence is rendered to Schubert's intentions. The *Partitions* (*Clavier-Partituren*) are almost note-for-note renderings of the orchestral text into a piano score showing Liszt's scrupulous treatment of the orchestral writing as a measure of his devotion to the composer. Paramount examples of the partition form are found in the masterly arrangements of the nine Beethoven symphonies, the Berlioz *Symphonie Fantastique*, and the *Liebestod* from Richard Wagner's *Tristan und Isolde*.

The *Song and Lieder Transcriptions* (*Transcriptionen von Gesängen und Liedern*) cover a wide range of Liszt's approaches to the underlying works. Often, these arrangements are strikingly faithful to the original; even in transcribed state, the vocal line is beautifully separated from, yet still married to, the piano accompaniment, an effect made possible only by Liszt's astonishing mastery of technique and coloration. In the transcription of Mendelssohn's *Auf Flügeln des Gesanges*, for example, Liszt essentially retains Mendelssohn's piano writing while artfully floating the song line into the sonorous middle register of the keyboard. In other works, such as his transcription of the Schubert *Erlkönig*, Liszt raises the emotional temperature by varying dynamics, interposing "cadenzas," and crafting phrases so as to heighten and intensify the listener's response. Though Artur Schnabel found the Schubert transcriptions reprehensible, Liszt's treatments of these works and the other song transcriptions are often heart-stoppingly beautiful.

The repository of the greatest number of high-explosive pieces (and, to be sure, of a number of more muted works) is the fourth category of *Fantasieen, Reminiscenzen, Illustrationen, Paraphrasen und Transcriptionen* of operatic and other themes. Common to all of these evocative titles is the idea of romantic memory, a recollection of motifs and emotions that remained with Liszt as the essence of the underlying work preserved, as it were, in a form of musical diary. In these works, Liszt does not so much reduce the massed forces of orchestra and soloists as he expands the powers of the piano to accommodate them.

Liszt's approach to operatic themes was different because opera is simply too long and its various elements too diverse to be treated in the same fashion as shorter forms. Instead, Liszt either transcribed set pieces, such as the *Valse* from Gounod's opera *Faust* or the quartet from the last act of *Rigoletto*; or, in the case of other high-octane works like the *Réminiscences de Don Juan* or the *Réminiscences de Norma*, he wove several of the opera's more characteristic themes into organically different music. In the abstract, these themes may appear singularly inappropriate for such treatment, but their counterpointing in Liszt's hands often assumes a most unexpected power. These free fantasies distill the dramatic essence of a three-hour opera into a work of much briefer duration, not only an artistic and substantive triumph, but also an apt contribution to our attention-deficit age when people appear to have shorter concentration spans than ever before.

At the heart of operatic transcription lies melody, usually expressed in blocked chords or in a singing *cantabile*. The glittering passage work often ornamenting the melody properly serves as color and shading. The opera transcriptions arose out of Liszt's virtuoso years during which he would regularly improvise on popular operatic themes. In due course, these *impromptu* became more formalized and were eventually published. But their spirit is fundamentally improvisational and the basis of im-

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provisation is melody. Delicacy and balance, qualities so highly prized by Liszt, are ruined by emphasizing display at the expense of simplicity. Yet Liszt's simplicity depends upon virtuosity of the highest order.

An effective example of Liszt's early approach to operatic transcription is found in his treatments of Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, which received its premiere in Naples in September 1835. The *Réminiscences de Lucia di Lammermoor* and the *Marche et cavatine* from that same opera date from late 1835 and 1836.

With *Lucia*, Liszt was working with excellent material. The opera was used by Flaubert (in *Madame Bovary*) and Tolstoy (in *Anna Karenina*) as the paradigm of stormy romanticism. Its effect on audiences was extremely powerful: during its first performances, sobs could be heard from the audience during the mad scene in which Lucia carries on her strange soliloquy, echoed by a disembodied flute. In the *Lucia* transcriptions, Liszt combines his strict and free-form styles to bear on the famous act 2 sextet, and the Ravenswood Cemetery scene in act 3.

The sextet is one of the greatest pieces in the literature. When Caruso sang it in New York, such pandemonium broke loose that a nightstick-wielding policeman stormed into the Met thinking that a riot had broken out. It is the pivotal point of *Lucia* with its conflicting and interwoven emotions of the enraged Edgar, the remorseful Enrico, the scarcely sane Lucia, and the sundry other rogues and varlets. Liszt's transcription commences in 3/4 time and, after its syncopated introduction, mirrors the orchestral and vocal parts before becoming airborne with a fluttering cadenza passage in the minor leading to a lovely arpeggio throughout the upper half of the keyboard. The time signature then changes to a somewhat unusual 9/8, and the theme is developed in right-hand chords while the left is occupied by a series of arpeggios and intermittent trills, softly played, but which by their continuous presence and increasing dynamics serve to create a sense of considerable emotional pressure. Liszt then notches up the temperature by inverting the right-hand-left-hand treatment of melody and accompaniment. The climax is reached when that tensely repressed accompaniment bursts through the surface of the melody. The artistry involved in creating this cathartic result is astonishing in its uncanny preservation of the sense and feel of the original work as encased in a vivid, dreamlike state.

The piece closes with a return in 3/4 to the original theme, which then fragments into booming left- and right-hand chords before once again coalescing into a final roller-coaster arpeggio that provides a sense of continuity to the ending: while there are no more notes to be played, the illusion of continuing music remains.

The *Marche et cavatine*, originally intended to be published as a sequel to the *Réminiscences*, was separated from its predecessor by Liszt's publisher and is somewhat more freely organized. The *Marche* commences quietly with a somber theme derived from the chorus *"O meschina! O fato orrendo!"* transformed by Liszt into music of considerable despondency and emotional stillness. The *Cavatine* is centered around the boiling argument at the end of act 2 starting with Enrico and Arthur's line *"Essi, fuggi"* (roughly, "get the hell out"). This theme is splendidly laid out in running right-hand octaves that are echoed by the left, increasing in tension until Liszt breaks out of the chordal forest and decelerates to Lucia and Edgar's response. Other themes from act 3 float through before the piece closes with a reference to the "sextet" theme of the *Réminiscences*, giving the two pieces a cyclical symmetry.

Other operas were treated differently. In the *Réminiscences de Norma*, Liszt employs four main themes (though not the famous *Casta Diva*—Sigismond Thalberg, Liszt's great rival, used that aria in his own setting of *Norma*), wringing from them considerable grandeur and pathos. *Norma* is shaded from dark to light, beginning in the gray key of G minor with a stentorian chordal introduction transforming to a more optimistic G major for the first principal theme. The work then modulates through several keys, darkening to B minor for the second theme but soon re-emerging into the warmth of B major for the sublime treatment of *Qual cor tradisti*. Liszt's stunning effect with this number is achieved on the simple principle that one plus one equals three: by juggling the melodic components between the two hands, holding that melody with the middle pedal, and then surrounding the result with rushing arpeggios in each intermittently freed hand, the bedazzled listener thinks that three hands are playing. The

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work then depresses to E-flat minor, building toward an even greater pianistic explosion than before when concluding in the exultant key of E-flat major. Liszt's triumphant ending does not quite parallel Norma's own (she, unfortunately, is burned alive for sexual misconduct), but every cloud has a silver lining: the confusion of emotions in the fortunate listener hearing this masterpiece played at close hand (let alone the terrific jolt that the performer gets) is utterly ravishing.

There are dozens of other examples of Liszt's high art of transcription. Hearing the *Marche funèbre de Don Sébastien* by Donizetti is akin to watching a great thunderhead move through at dusk, illuminated from the middle by occasional flashes of lightning, feeling its muffled thunder and marveling at its black, disruptive beauty. *Réminiscences de Don Juan*, a formidable example of the cloven-hooved aspect of Liszt, is built on three episodes from Mozart's opera presented (according to proper satanic protocol) out of order. Witnessing a performance of this Manichaean work with its diamond-hard luster and drill-like intensity is one of life's great treats. Its point of departure is the final act of the opera in which the recently slain Commendatore invites Don Juan to dinner, a barbecue, as it turns out, of the Don himself. The *Réminiscences* commence with various of the Commendatore's baleful imprecations set in massive, somber chords. The awful comedy wrought from the implacable Stone Guest being rebuffed by the sneering Don is heightened by Liszt's introducing the rising and falling chromatic scales accompanying the Commendatore's words "Not for dining do I now descend," evoking the moaning and shrieking inhabitants of Hell. The second episode, which follows so quickly on the first that one can still smell sulphur, is the love duet in theme-and-variation form between the Don and the nubile Zerlina, in which the Don (at least in Liszt's treatment) succeeds in his timeless mission of seduction. This amorously playful scene is overtaken by the Commendatore's fateful invitation and the reappearance of the hellish scale work now struggling to vanquish the love music. Through the smoke and flame, glimpses of the final theme, the drinking song from act 1, appear on the teeth of the scale work and evolve into a wild galop. As the Don roars off DWI-style, Liszt slyly tells us where the road ends by reprising those doom-laden chromatic passages one last time and ending the piece in an appropriately pyromaniacal fashion.

Liszt abruptly retired from the life of the touring virtuoso in 1847 to devote the rest of his life to composition, conducting, and pedagogy. He remained devoted to transcription as an art form, composing new works and revising old—additional evidence (were more needed) that these works were considerably more than glib and flamboyant party pieces created to wow the crowds.

So why have these works suffered both condemnation and oblivion? To some extent, the complexities of the music, its massive textures and unfamiliar themes, may contribute to an initial sense of disorientation in the listener. To a greater degree, exigencies of execution are certainly to blame. The performance of a work is every bit as important as its conception, because music is, after all, created to be heard. Like Alkan, Liszt demands maximum effort for minimal return: each composer demands that his interpreters undergo exceptional emotional and physical demands while ruthlessly suppressing any suggestion of display. The combination of these two factors is deadly.

Liszt's transcriptions show us the musical thinking of a composer moved and inspired by the artistry of other composers, while understanding that the musical substance of the underlying works is not static but capable of constant reworking and evolution. The transcriptions are more than monuments to other men's greatness. They are eloquent and moving testimonials to a different kind of musical beauty. In the hands of Liszt's more generous and capable disciples, we better sense that which lies beneath the surface of the originals, understand how Liszt's febrile and inspired mind responded to those originals, and appreciate his remarkable conveyance to us of the sensations that the originals awoke in him. Through the transcriptions we glimpse Liszt's own sense of musical architecture and dramatic essence as refracted through the medium of the piano, the instrument on which he was the greatest master the world has yet seen. Hearing the great transcriptions performed with the devotion and respect they merit cannot but persuade the listener of the simplicity, majesty, and, indeed, greatness of these wonderful works.

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Ghetto Fighter

Yitzhak Zuckerman and the Jewish Underground in Warsaw

MICHAEL R. MARRUS

Near the end of his nine-hour film, *Shoah*, Claude Lanzmann asks Yitzhak Zuckerman, once the deputy-commander of the Jewish insurgents in the Warsaw Ghetto, to reflect on his experience. "I began drinking after the war," Zuckerman replies. "It was very difficult. . . . If you could lick my heart, you would be poisoned." Throughout his life Zuckerman, or "Antek" as he was known in the underground, tried to contend with his terrible past—a past, he noted, that kept coming up, like the lava of an extinguished volcano. "I'm not the one who determines the timing and it bursts out of me and is part of me," he has written. "It doesn't get easier or weaker with the years; on the contrary, it gets sharper."

After the war Zuckerman lived, as Israeli journalist Tom Segev notes in a recent book, *The Seventh Million: The Israelis and the Holocaust* (translated by Haim Watzman, Hill and Wang, 1993) as though the Holocaust never ended. Over and over again he sifted the ashes of his experience, torturing himself with the impossible question: "What should we have done that we didn't do?" Seemingly unsure that he had done enough, Zuckerman remained in Poland for more than two years after the Liberation, working with Jewish survivors and helping to organize *Brikha*, the smuggling of illegal Jewish immigrants to Palestine. In the spring of 1947 he migrated himself to Palestine, where he helped to found the Kibbutz Lohamei Ha-Getaot, the Ghetto Fighters' Kibbutz, and later the important museum and research center there, named after the murdered Jewish poet Yitzhak Katznelson. Devoted to the commemoration of the Holocaust, and yet unable to communicate his personal account except in fragments, Zuckerman lived with the pain stored up inside him.

Finally, in the wake of the Yom Kippur War, on the urging of friends, he recorded his memoirs on tape. His requirement was that the tapes not be transcribed, and the book not be published, until after his death. "As long as he was sure things would remain hidden for a long time, he would be freer in his tale," he told his friend Yoske Rabinovitch. He had hard, sometimes bitter things to say, and he wanted neither to draw attention excessively to himself nor to be inhibited in his account. He was fifty-eight at the time and had only seven years to live. Working without documents, he relied solely on his memory—the "surplus of memory," as he put it, that burdened him all his life. The result is a torrent of images, events, impressions, character sketches, and reflections—an unforgettable account that stands with the most important of our century's personal testimonies of struggle against totalitarian oppression.

As one expects with memory, particularly painful and traumatic memories such as these, Zuckerman's story is sometimes repetitious, imprecise, and emotional. It also accents his own role, his own political movement, and his own perspective. His book, *A Surplus of Memory: Chronicle of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising* (translated by Barbara Harshav, University of California Press, 1993) is a personal, urgent

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exercise in remembering, and its eloquence does not lie in balance, organization, or carefully crafted language. His prose is unadorned—a sign of strength, given the horrors he describes, as the late Irving Howe noted. Passages are sometimes angry, sometimes ironic, and sometimes argumentative; and they convey a wide register of wartime preoccupations. Fear jostles with tension, sorrow, rage, hunger, frustration, and commitment to an exalted ideal. What struck me powerfully was Zuckerman's account of the Jewish underground in the Warsaw Ghetto, and I hope to situate what he has to say in a context of Jewish politics and Jewish resistance during the Holocaust.

Zuckerman's political vision illuminates nearly every page of his long account, and its salience captures a remarkable feature of Jewish public life in pre-war East Central Europe—its extraordinary ideological sophistication. Zuckerman was born in 1915 in Vilna, that great city of conflicting Jewish ideologies, both religious and secular, scientific and humanistic. His paternal grandfather was a rabbi, unenthusiastic about his profession (and also, he notes, a *schoichet*, or ritual slaughterer, who couldn't stand the sight of blood); and his father, an immigrant from Kiev, both a Zionist and an observant Jew, tall and erect; as someone said, "If you had put a bucket of water on his head, not a single drop would have fallen to the ground." His mother was a Litvak who had moved to Vilna from a nearby village when she was a young girl. Zuckerman went first to a religious primary school run by the Mizrakhi organization, where instruction was in Yiddish, and then to a Hebrew secular *gymnasium*—"an aristocratic institution, whose very high tuition posed a heavy financial burden on the family," as he remembered.

Only twenty-three when the Nazis began the Second World War, Zuckerman shared the passion of a generation of young Jewish men and women for modern programs of Jewish national rebirth. He joined the Zionist youth movement known as He-Halutz Ha-Tza'ir (Young Pioneer), later referred to as Dror (Freedom). One of several Zionist movements that ranged from the extreme left to extreme right, Dror activists blended an enthusiasm for a kibbutz life in Palestine together with their own brand of communitarian socialism, Jewish nationalism, and modern Hebrew culture. Among Zionist youth movements, their closest rivals were members of Hashomer Ha-Tza'ir (Young Guard), confirmed Marxists who were far more "intellectual" in their approach to Jewish life and much more prone to see in the Soviet Union a model and a guide and a prospective ally for the Zionist enterprise of the future. Mostly teenagers, with a few leaders in their early twenties, these young people stood at arm's length from more established Jewish political groups—two leftist Zionist Po'alei Zion parties, the socialist Bund, religious parties as well as middle-class formations—that had dominated pre-war Jewish political life.

For all these youth groups, the intensity of their ideological debate—and often the closer the political kinship, the more intense the struggle—indicated just how seriously they took abstract theorizing as a framework for political action. Throughout 1940, long after the defeat of Poland by the Nazis, while the Jews were being persecuted, herded into ghettos by the Germans, and massacred, the Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir activist Yosef Kaplan held forth on how the war was an "imperialistic war" fought among the capitalist powers and in which the Jews shouldn't take sides. Later, in the ghetto of Warsaw, through the ordeals of starvation, torture, and murder, night after night the young idealists disputed what kind of socialism they favored, under what terms Jewish political groups should work together, the role of the Soviet Union, and so forth.

Language was one of the sharpest fields of disagreement. Zuckerman's comrades in Dror were Hebraists, even though they felt positively about Yiddish, the working language of the Jewish population. Their rivals in Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir favored Hebrew as well, but after that preferred Polish, being mainly graduates from Polish schools. Mordechai Anielewicz, the Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir leader and commander of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising, spoke Yiddish at home but Polish with his colleagues. "His mother (who sold fish), Zuckerman notes, "certainly didn't speak Polish. And if she did, the Poles would have had a hard time understanding her." Zuckerman used Yiddish with Anielewicz at meetings, but they would break into Hebrew when they didn't want some participants to understand. Bundists such as Marek Edelman, committed to building a socialist movement among the

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"Jewish masses" in Poland, refused as anti-Zionists to have anything to do with Hebrew and insisted on Yiddish. The wonder is that these activists managed to communicate with one another at all.

Yet, even as their disputation raged, they had much in common. Full of youthful enthusiasm, they lavished attention on those aspects of Jewish culture that validated their respective points of view, preferring highbrow or popular, Yiddish or Hebrew, literary, scholarly, or theatrical. Bundists, Dror, and Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir sat together in lectures organized by the ghetto's Yiddish Cultural Organization YIKOR, and also Tekuma (Revival), an institution to foster Hebrew culture. Inevitably, each of these organizations assumed sociopolitical coloring. "In comparison with Tekuma," Zuckerman reports, "the members of YIKOR were 'more ideological,' more alert and lively; its members were younger and more lower class, tending to Yiddish; and, of course, YIKOR was very active in lectures, parties, discussions, literary soirées on Mendele and other writers." Tekuma, which held its meetings in Hebrew, seems to have been more academic: its central person was the historian Menakhem Stein, a famous professor of Judaic Studies at the University of Warsaw and a student of the Hellenistic period.

For these youngsters, comradeship was at the core of social life in the ghetto and became a natural vehicle for underground organization. A basic conception, Zuckerman notes, was "giving the comrade the best soup." "None of us died of hunger or disease," he recalls—at a time when tens of thousands of Jews were perishing—something that he attributes to the solidarity and mutual aid that was at the core of the movement. Dror activists formed a commune in one of the apartments on Dzielna Street, and until the ghetto was sealed, ran two agricultural training collectives outside the city, supposedly preparing activists to migrate to Palestine. Decisions were reached by consensus, rather than by vote, and leaders such as Zuckerman emerged through the force of personality and their own persistent claims—all of which involved constant, endless, exhausting debate—and this, one must remember, in circumstances of constant privation and terror.

From the beginning of the war, Zuckerman worked as a He-Halutz organizer—first in eastern Poland under Soviet occupation, and then in Warsaw, where he was sent by his movement to launch a clandestine press and build an underground organization. Tall, like his father, and strikingly handsome with what were perceived as Aryan features, including a stylish mustache, Zuckerman looked like a leader, older than his years, and seems to have very quickly established his preeminence. He had "a rare combination of strength and beauty," the journalist Haim Gouri later wrote. After the Germans sealed Jews in their Warsaw prison, Zuckerman traveled secretly to other ghettos, on foot or by train, usually at night, and often at terrible risk, working for the cause. In part because of his travels, he grasped more quickly than most the pattern of Jewish victimization throughout occupied Poland.

At the beginning, the Jews were robbed and humiliated. Zuckerman recounts how he stopped wearing a hat so as not to have to take it off, as Jews were required to do, in the presence of Germans. Then ghettos were established, and the Jews were deliberately starved and carried off as slave laborers. The established Jewish leaders did their best to adjust, to salvage what they could, and to help Jews to survive. The youth movements found themselves feeling increasingly out of touch with their elders, as the latter conformed to the rules of the occupation. Defying the Nazis, Zuckerman learned the art of survival underground—moving suddenly from one apartment to the next, using false papers, aware that at any moment he could be denounced, caught in some roundup, or betrayed by some stupid mistake. "I never knew if the violinist or the beggar, the newspaper vendor or the cigarette seller, standing innocently, strolling, was really a violinist or a cigarette seller—or a Gestapo agent," he observes. Once he was sent to a labor camp where he was tortured and ordered to be executed. Later, in Kraków, he was shot in the leg by the Germans and miraculously escaped. Another time he was on his way to the Umschlagplatz in the Warsaw Ghetto, the embarkation point for Treblinka, but managed to slip away at the last moment.

During the first months of ghetto life there was tremendous hardship, but practically no one grasped the even more horrible fate that lay in store. "We were young, we had a lot of energy and a lot of faith," Zuckerman re-

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called, "and we also lacked information. . . . We thought we would save the young generation, or at any rate the nuclei of the young generation, and protect them as Halutzim, members of the Movement, until the end of the war. We thought we would get through the war, but with a great many casualties." As early as November 1941, Zuckerman claims, he first realized that the Jews were destined for total destruction, rather than random, periodic murder. Some of the earliest indications came from his hometown of Vilna; tens of thousands of Jews, he learned, were shot in the nearby woods of Ponar, where in his boyhood his family once had a summer cottage. It was a ghastly shock, and Zuckerman suffered a momentary breakdown. "The news that Ponar was death sliced through me like a razor." Terrifying reports soon confirmed the worst. A few weeks after the account of Ponar, he and his comrades heard from a gravedigger who escaped from the death camp of Chelmno. Jews, apparently, were being killed by poison gas.

Thereafter Zuckerman and his colleagues worked to shatter the illusions that permeated the ghetto, particularly when it came to the roundups and deportations. "In those days, [illusions] meant that, when things were happening in Lublin, people said: 'That won't happen in Warsaw.' When it did happen in Warsaw, they said: 'That happened on Nalewki, but it won't happen on Gesia.' When it did happen on Gesia, they said it happened at number 32, but it won't happen in my house, number 28!'" The Nazi-imposed Judenrat or Jewish Council of Warsaw, headed by the engineer Adam Czerniakow, helped maintain a crust of normality, feeding illusions and allaying suspicions about the Germans' intentions. Zuckerman never met Czerniakow, although he remembered him attending a Shevuoth ceremony at one of the Dror training farms, in the presence of the Germans, before the ghetto was sealed. In Zuckerman's view, Czerniakow was an honest man and certainly no traitor. But quite simply, he was not up to the task of leading the Jews in that terrible time. In July 1942, when ordered to round up Jews for deportation from Warsaw, Czerniakow took cyanide and ended his life. As with other Jews in the ghetto, Zuckerman's judgment was severe: "He could have committed suicide in another way, as a leader of the community warning his people. . . . In national terms, Czerniakow's behavior wasn't worthy of his position, it wasn't the behavior of a person who professed to be a leader."

The essential thing was to spread the alarm. For Zuckerman, warning his fellow Jews took precedence over what some others proposed—a desperate, hopeless assault on the Germans with sticks and stones. The message was a simple one: "'Resettlement' meant Treblinka, and Treblinka meant death." To spread the alarm also meant communicating with the outside, and in describing his elaborate efforts to do so, in coded letters, Zuckerman's anger rises at the abandonment of Polish Jewry. That the world was silent, he and his colleagues seem to have taken for granted. But that their own movement's counterparts in Switzerland, Turkey, and even in Palestine appeared to have done so little to help was intolerable. "Our hearts were bitter, very bitter," Zuckerman writes. "We simply couldn't understand it." When Warsaw's Jews were being sent to Treblinka and the underground was virtually powerless, he and his friends made lists of "'who we're going to hang in Erez Israel,' and in what order."

In July 1942, after the failure of a Communist-inspired effort in the spring to bring Jewish underground organizations together, a handful of Zionist youth leaders from Dror, Ha-Shomer Ha-Tza'ir, and a few smaller groups set up the "Jewish Fighting Organization" (ZOB). When the Hebrew edition of his book appeared in Israel, intense debates arose among a handful of survivors of these movements—who were loyal to their comrades after almost half a century—over Zuckerman's precise claims of the preeminence of Dror. In his own account, Zuckerman was one of the original architects, together with his girlfriend from Dror, the formidable Zivia Lubetkin. None of the "adult" formations, he makes clear—the Po'alei Zion or the Bund, for example—took part in those first discussions, and whatever the precise details of their coming together, one cannot overemphasize how audacious was the claim of these youngsters, most of them in their late teens or early twenties, representing such a tiny fragment of the ghetto population, to speak about "national" or "historic" obligations to resist. "Who knew us? Who were we, anyway?" Zuckerman asks, repeating objections of fifty years ago. "As far

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as everyone was concerned, we were on the fringes of Jewish life."

Groups forming the ZOB coalesced during massive German deportations of Jews from Warsaw in July, August, and September—*aktsia* that reduced the ghetto in a few months from 335,000 to between 70,000 and 75,000 Jews. Their movement was fueled by anger, by a hunger for historic retribution, but also, one must say, by shame—however unreasonable or unjust that feeling may seem to us. Why had the activists not struck out before—at the Jewish police, for example? A year had passed since the outbreak of the war against the Soviet Union, Zuckerman notes, "and we hadn't done anything at all: the Jewish police were armed with rubber truncheons and knives. That is, they didn't have guns. All we had to do was kill them. If a few of them had been killed, others would have been afraid to join the police. . . . I never forgave myself for not doing what we should have."

Why had they not done so? Zuckerman has his own answer. What the Jews lacked was time—not only time to plan, prepare, and organize a revolt, but time also to grasp that there was no alternative, that the rebels had no other hope but to launch a doomed uprising—not to mention that among the first steps was that Jews had to kill Jews. These deductions may appear inescapable to us, but as Zuckerman recounts the debates, one appreciates how difficult it was to reach them, and how painful it was for him ever after to reflect on alternatives:

> We hadn't yet come to that awareness about the police. So every day we delayed was lost. I had no doubt about it then, and I have no doubt about it now, and it's been decades since then. I've had many days and nights of thinking. And I've read a lot and tried to rethink what I could have done and didn't do. And I must repeat once more that, even if we had started the war with the Judenrat police on July 22 and done everything possible we wouldn't have saved the people. That's not what I blame us for. Our blame is that we could have delayed the sentence, we could have made it hard for the Germans, we could have forced them to bring 10,000 Germans to do the work done by 2000 to 3000 Jewish police.

Astonishingly to us, the claims of ideology remained powerful among the rebels, even as Jews were being driven to the Umschlagplatz and as the trains departed regularly to Treblinka, carrying away 80 percent of the ghetto population. Bundists refused to participate under the same political umbrella as the Zionists; their view was that the Jews had to act in concert with Polish workers under the banner of socialism and should not act on their own. And so while the Bundists agreed to join the ZOB, they refrained from being part of its political counterpart, the Jewish National Committee—which in turn was a requirement of the mainstream Polish resistance force, the Armia Krajowa (AK), which did not deign to deal with "youth groups." To satisfy these various needs and sensitivities, the ghetto fighters had to construct an elaborate grid of interconnecting organizations. At the same time, the nationalist right, or Revisionists, could not work with the others at all and formed their own independent fighting organization. In the end the ZOB included about five hundred fighters, grouped in twenty-two politically defined units, and the Revisionists numbered some 250 more.

Objectives were articulated as the idea of armed resistance took hold and leaders pondered their pitifully few options. The first task was to disrupt the deportation plans, urge Jews not to go to the Umschlagplatz, and shatter the authority of the Jewish police who were urging them to do so. Zuckerman and his fellow activists condemned to death a few Jewish policemen and carried out the sentences. They sent emissaries to other ghettos to encourage armed revolts and escapes. They supplemented funds smuggled into their coffers by the American Joint Distribution Committee with what they called "Exes," or "expropriations"—confiscating or extorting funds from wealthy Jews who remained inside the ghetto.

Zuckerman and his friends deliberately discouraged the construction of elaborate bunkers, fearing that these would encourage retreat. "Our whole strategy was built from the first and with the clear awareness that the fighters had no escape. And the command staff explicitly decided to plan everything on battles in the ghetto we wouldn't survive." What they expected was a very brief flash of resistance—after which the ghetto would be crushed. "We saw ourselves as a Jewish underground whose fate was a tragic one," Zuckerman explained after the war,

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as an underground that was not part of the overall war of undergrounds the world over and would have to stand cut off and alone; as a pioneer force not only from the Jewish standpoint but also from the standpoint of the entire embattled world—the first to fight. For our hour had come without any sign of hope or rescue.

The ghetto fighters knew well that they would fight alone. "The possibility that we had the strength to endure for weeks in battle with the Germans didn't occur to anyone. So we didn't prepare for that. Even the food we amassed wasn't enough for more than a short time."

Zuckerman recounts in minute detail how the ZOB's tiny arsenal of weapons was assembled. It seems pointless here to enter into the sometimes heated controversy between Jewish and Polish resistance personalities about precisely what offers were made, how many weapons Jews received from the Polish underground, when they were sent, what kinds of weapons these were, and what their condition was. Suffice it to say that, from the Jewish perspective, the help was meager indeed. Zuckerman, inclined at times to be generous in his description of Poles, is harsh indeed on this matter. As he recalled, in the end the Armia Krajowa sent fifty pistols, forty-nine of which arrived. Their Communist counterparts, the Armia Ludowa, had little to offer, but probably supplied their Jewish counterparts with a small number of guns. Later, at the beginning of the uprising, they offered a huge cache—twenty-eight rifles. More weapons were purchased on the Aryan side and smuggled with great difficulty across the ghetto walls. The result was a motley collection, a veritable United Nations of firearms and grenades—Polish, Czech, Belgian, Soviet, German, and others—in all shapes, sizes, and calibers. The fighters also built their own explosive devices: Molotov cocktails, using a recipe provided by Armia Krajowa, pipe bombs, and a crude incendiary device made by filling electric light bulbs with sulfuric acid.

Zuckerman is unsparing on the subject of Polish anti-Semitism, but seldom without qualification or reference to the historical context. Within the Armia Krajowa, he contends, the leading opinions were: first, that the Jews were incapable of fighting; and second, that if they did fight, they were likely acting in concert with the Soviets. Zuckerman describes his meeting, only hours before the ghetto uprising, with Henryk Wotynski, known as Waclaw, a sympathetic underground fighter in charge of Jewish affairs within the Armia Krajowa. "I'm tall and he's short, with eyeglasses and, in terms of looks, he could be suspected of being a Jew," Zuckerman tells us.

I said something, and then we got down to business and it's etched in my mind because he came right to the point. He began by saying that not everyone—in the ghetto—sympathized with us. The Judenrat, he said, sent information that we were nothing but simple bandits who carry out "Exes" steal money from Jews, instead of preparing for battle. . . . He said that in that period of the triumph of forces hostile to the Poles, they were afraid of a revolt that would begin in the ghetto and spread beyond it. Because they didn't have enough weapons to hold out in an aggressive attack—hence their fears.

Quite apart from the hostility with which many Poles viewed the Jews, the Home Army view opposed a Jewish uprising in principle, and so rejected the idea of launching attacks on the Aryan side that would coincide with the ghetto revolt: "The AK always made its own, Polish, accounting, which told them that, if our uprising spread beyond the wall, Polish Warsaw would be prematurely inflamed by an uprising doomed to failure because the Germans would easily put it down." "We knew the essence of their theory," Zuckerman notes, "which held that there was a bloody struggle between the two big powers, the Germans and the Russians, and that they had to wait and see how things would turn out. . . . That Poland had to wait, amass forces, until her two big neighbors bled each other and were exhausted. Then they (the Poles) would appear on the stage of battles." The Jews, of course, could not wait, and therein lay the fundamental inconvenience of their uprising for the non-Communist underground on the other side of the ghetto walls.

Zuckerman distinguishes carefully among Poles, emphatically rejecting blanket condemnations. The Armia Krajowa, he points out, "included members of the Polish Socialist Party, socialists of the left and the right, democrats as well as fascists." Notwithstanding the ultimate incompatibility of Communism and Zionism, he reports consistent sympathy from the ranks of the pro-Soviet Armia Ludowa,

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then a very weak and badly armed underground force. Not yet corrupted by Stalinism, these Communists were friendly to Jews and "demonstrated exceptional personal and movement integrity." some Poles risked their lives smuggling weapons for Jews through Aryan Warsaw. Others, notably a group of Polish scouts and idealistic Catholic youth, provided a constant link to the outside. But in the end the Jews fought their uprising alone. Zuckerman recalled his letter to General Bór-Komorowski, commander of the Armia Krajowa and leader of the city of Warsaw uprising in August 1944. "We appealed about the camps, and we were not answered; we asked for weapons to die with honor, we, the last Jews on Polish soil, in our struggle with the Germans, and we were not answered."

Yet Zuckerman has a remarkably generous assessment of reactions of ordinary Poles. The uprising itself "roused extraordinary respect for the Jewish fighters. The Polish press was full of excitement and wonder, not just some leftist or liberal leaders, but the simple sympathy of the masses." About twenty thousand Jews went into hiding on the Aryan side of the city, 90 percent of whom, Zuckerman adds, because they looked Jewish. In his estimate, roughly ten thousand Polish families, or at least forty thousand non-Jews in Warsaw, helped keep these fugitives alive. "From this perspective," he concludes, "the French were not better than the Poles, and were perhaps even worse. And keep in mind that this stood out against a strong and deep-rooted antisemitism in the Polish people."

On April 13, 1943, Zuckerman slipped across to the Aryan side, under orders to make contact with Polish underground leaders. His job was exceedingly dangerous—to negotiate with a sometimes uncooperative Home Army and replenish the small stock of weapons the ghetto fighters had managed to procure. Six days later on the first night of Passover, Zuckerman decided to return briefly to the ghetto. "I was terribly lonely," he writes. "I hated being in a strange place on Passover, for the Seder. So I thought I would go in for twenty-four or forty-eight hours." But his way was blocked. Early in the morning of April 19, SS General Jürgen Stroop entered the ghetto in force, intending to round up Jews. The few hundred ZOB fighters, together with the Revisionists, now launched the Warsaw Ghetto Revolt.

Zuckerman was a spectator for much of the battle, filled with rage, grief, and frustration. He attempted, without much success, to contact the insurgents by telephone—an indication of how, on the Aryan side, the Jews were so near and yet so far away. Fighting went on spectacularly for almost a week, although resistance continued for more than a month. On April 23, Aneliewicz wrote to Zuckerman on the Aryan side:

> As of this evening, we are going over to guerrilla warfare. . . . We need grenades, rifles, machine guns, and explosives. I cannot describe the conditions that Jews are living under to you. Only very exceptional individuals will survive. All the rest will die sooner or later. Our fate has been decided.

Zuckerman could do little but observe and report. His account is fragmentary, and perhaps his most vivid direct testimony is of the warmth of the Polish reaction. "As the ghetto was burning," he recalls, "I would mix with the crowd assembled to watch the ghetto walls. At that time there was a lot of sympathy and admiration for the Jews, because everyone understood that the struggle was against the Germans. They admired the Jews' courage and strength. . . . With my own eyes I saw Poles crying, just standing and crying."

As one might expect, Zuckerman provides an ideological framework for this sympathetic assessment, relating it to the disputes within his movement over the importance for Jews of "Polish patriotism"—to refer to the slogan of the day. He offers additional pronouncements to justify his decision to fight side by side with Poles against the Germans when Warsaw rose up against them in the summer of 1944, and he also explains why it was correct, after the war, to salvage the remnant of Polish Jewry for migration to Palestine. To be sure, ideology deserves a hearing. But far more arresting, indeed at the very core of Zuckerman's memoir, is the struggle against a cruel fate of a proud, indomitable culture of young Polish-Jewish men and women, and the anguished testimony of a brave, humane, idealistic, and truly exceptional human being.

"What should we have done that we didn't do?" Zuckerman asks at the end of his memoir, taking up the recurring theme. "The decisive judgment is historical judgment. If I were

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chosen to stand before such a judgment I would say that I was late, I was late in everything. For we could have done everything a little sooner, a little different. They say maybe that's no accident. I don't know. I can't blame anybody but myself—that I'm allowed." To the end, the memory of the Holocaust held Yitzhak Zuckerman in its grip.

Love Letter

MARTIN RYAN

It is hard to say
The weight of pleasure
Which came over me
At the sound of your voice
An ocean and a continent away,
No letter ever quite matched it,
Though many lovely lines there were
Which sculpted as they went
The very form and substance
Our love would take.
Bless you for those days.

The heart, mind, body, soul and all
Engaged in love and self-forgetfulness
Is very close to whatever there is of God in us
And so, humbling and exalting at once.
Lives lived without it, ever,
Have great desert places no matter
How successful or seeming happy
And we are not now nor ever can be
Among those who do not know
What a huge oasis such deserts can become.
In that, no matter what our fate,
We are immutably secure
For we were there and it was us.

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Céline

The Problem

RENEE WINEGARTEN

The general opinion of Céline today, among the literati and literary historians, is that he is a great writer—"a very great writer" according to Philip Roth. This view raises at once the question of the meaning we ascribe to the word *greatness* in literature, a word that is bandied about far too loosely. If Cervantes and Montaigne, Balzac and George Eliot, Tolstoy and Proust are "great" writers, then where precisely should we place Louis-Ferdinand Destouches (1894–1961) who took the pen name Céline from his mother and grandmother? Do we find in him the imaginative and creative power, the penetrating largeness of human understanding enjoyed by those rare writers endowed with true greatness? Or can literary greatness be dependent solely on something called style? It would be otiose to deny that such matters are highly subjective. In a world that has seen the rejection of humanism, why not elevate Céline and his dehumanized worldview?

The pariah of 1945 became, some fifteen years after the Liberation, the subject of a literary industry that has flourished ever since. The Algerian War helped to foster a spirit of outspoken reaction against the pieties of the French Resistance that had held sway in the immediate post-war era. Céline's admirers range from detached rebels, onetime Fascist sympathizers and members of the extreme Right in France (where one might well expect to find them) to reputable liberal novelists or large-minded literary critics there and elsewhere. These last include some of Jewish origin who, whether from genuine admiration and indebtedness, from masochism and revolt, or from a deep-seated urge to display their magnanimity, do not choke on Céline's three notorious hate-filled anti-Semitic tomes, the tellingly named *Bagatelles pour un massacre* (*Trifles for a Massacre*, 1937), *L'Ecole des cadavres* (*School for Corpses*, 1938), and *Les Beaux Draps* (*A Pretty Pickle*, 1941). Indeed, perhaps they have never even turned the pages of one of these books, known politely in French as "pamphlets" or lampoons. Extremely influential in their day in contributing to mold public opinion, the three works remain, at the moment of writing, out of print in France.

There are various strategies for dealing with this odious material, rendered more dangerous for being published at a time when its targeted victims were being hounded across Europe. Some of these strategies are of monumental idiocy or disingenuousness. One method is to decline in a lordly fashion to take the work seriously (like André Gide, on the publication of *Bagatelles pour un massacre* in 1937). This tome can then be regarded as nothing but a joke, the product of a masterly political satirist. Another is to discount the whole theme by proclaiming that "a great poet" such as Céline has the right to say anything he likes. Yet another extreme scenario is to avoid the knotty problem altogether by declaring at the outset that one is not going to discuss it at all and to proceed, like Paul del Perugia, to publish in 1987 a volume of 656 pages on Céline's "spirituality" without regard to anti-Semitism. With egregious timidity, before expressing judgment he prefers to wait until the "pamplets" are reprinted, "so that

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Célinian anti-Semitism can be placed in everyone's hands"—astounding phrase.

Some writers make excuses: in Dominique de Roux's opinion, the tenderhearted Céline, "this infinitely tender sensibility," saintly doctor to the poor, would never have tolerated racial persecution. These words could actually be said of the man who bemoaned the decline of "the white race"; who dreaded (after Spengler) "the yellow peril"; who cried in *L'Ecole des cadavres*, "Racism! Of course! And how! The more of it the merrier!" and who urged there a confederation of the Aryan states of Europe. In *Les Beaux Draps* in 1941, at a moment of increasing racial persecution under the Nazi Occupation, he opined that the ubiquitous Jews, more arrogant than ever, should be strangled by their purse strings. In the collaborationist press he wrote letters complaining that the Vichy leaders were far too wishy-washy and cautious in their anti-Jewish policies.

Céline was astounded (so he told the enigmatic German novelist and cultural representative, Ernst Jünger, in December 1941) that German soldiers "do not shoot, hang, exterminate the Jews." He had not long to wait. In terms of chilling relevance to so-called "ethnic cleansing" in the Balkans today, Céline raved on about how a population can be purified, "neighborhood by neighborhood, house by house. If I carried a bayonet I'd know what I had to do." And so on for two hours, confided the stunned Ernst Jünger to his diary. Perhaps, as the novelist Frédéric Vitoux eloquently proposes in his 1988 biography of Céline (*Céline: A Biography*, translated into English by Jesse Browner), this was indeed the Frenchman at his most penetrating and outrageous, determined at all costs to shock the detached and refined German writer—and perhaps not. Céline firmly believed that, to recreate France, the country would need to be entirely rebuilt on racist foundations. Even later, when the scale of the Nazi Final Solution became fully known, Céline would never express any regrets concerning the Nazi extermination of the Jews and others, or the deportation of French Jews to the death camps. Rather the reverse: he stuck to his guns.

In objectifying his private terrors, as apologists like to put it, Céline was not aiming at individual Jews but merely at what he considered Jewish exploitation and warmongering; and, personally, he would not have harmed a fly. (The false notion that Jews were eager for war against Nazi Germany was an essential part of the pro-German, pacifist, Fascist argument everywhere, bolstered by Nazi propaganda.) To sustain so abstract a form of reasoning is to overlook Céline's insatiable rage and resentment, his hatred and bitter mockery of all those well-placed Jewish doctors who befriended him. In his opinion, there were far too many Jewish doctors blocking his path: he was hardly sorry when they and their like were dismissed. With competition eliminated, and after no little effort on his part, he managed at last to obtain the post of physician at Bezons, and he was soon promoted to the administration of the Seine-et-Oise *département*, a place he occupied from 1940–44.

Some apologists for Céline express the view that, whatever may be thought about the disagreeable anti-Semitic subject matter, it is the style that counts. As regards style, according to one Charles Plisnier, *Bagatelles pour un massacre* is a literary masterpiece—provided (he proposed absurdly) that one puts aside its meaning and its prejudices. This was very much the line sagely followed by Céline himself in his later years when, as Frédéric Vitoux remarks, he sought "to clean up" his image. Céline took to proclaiming disingenuously that he was simply an anarchist, and thoroughly apolitical: he had no political ties or aims; besides, he had never voted. Above all, Céline maintained, he was a stylist, a writer concerned solely with expressing emotion.

It is to treat style as a kind of grace that somehow redeems all. Frédéric Vitoux himself sees the work as "saved" by Céline's form of play through parody and comedy. The comic exaggeration or deformation sometimes functions as a kind of useful veil, so that the reader may be left in doubt as to whether Céline is actually being serious or not. For him, words were supposedly "a game": he did not envisage or comprehend that they are deeds and have consequences. Can style alone, bereft of content, bear the burden of literary judgment? Is literature ultimately so narrow and limited a field of endeavor? Is art so constrained and constricted? If so, it is no wonder that literature as such has fallen into disrepute.

The best strategy for dealing with so equivocal a figure is probably that mainly followed by Frédéric Vitoux, who seems to be obsessed by

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his notorious predecessor. Vitoux has written three earlier books on the jaundiced writer, including one about Céline's cat, the much-traveled Bébert. He makes no bones about the odious nature of Céline's anti-Semitic writings and about their deleterious influence on the public at the time, while coolly setting them in the context of the widespread anti-Semitism of the day. Yet he, too, falls into the trap of elevating his enthusiasm for Céline's hallucinatory lucubrations, for what he calls Céline's "delirium" (the word *délire* being repeated ad nauseam). Vitoux defines *delirium*, "one of the most decisive words in the Célinian vocabulary," in an interpretation of his own: "Delirium is the second state of existence that distances dull, prosaic reality, and an excess of which makes the writer (like his hero) incomparably clear-sighted in the depths of his misery, enabling him to distinguish the true poetic and convulsive realities contained in life and death." How can *delirium* or aberration make a person lucid in despair? This is high-sounding stuff that does not bear examination. It seeks to elevate and transform *delirium* into a philosophical and literary quality or virtue—which it is not.

It was the seventeenth-century satirical poet and literary legislator, Nicolas Boileau-Despréaux, who declared that poetry always betrays the poet's meanness of spirit. Things were simpler then, when high value was placed on nobility of soul. Now you can be as mean-spirited as you like, provided you are mean-spirited with talent, verve, and style. The more *maudit* or accursed that authors appear, as rebels and even perverts, the more fascinating they and their writings supposedly become. They are not being judged today on their contribution to the enlargement and enrichment of the human spirit. In a cultural climate where the text is regarded as paramount, theoretically the author's failings and limitations should be irrelevant. Yet in the case of a deeply personal, emotional writer such as Céline, who used and re-used the (often shady) experiences of his life in his work, elaborating, exaggerating, and fantasizing them, it is impossible to separate the text from the author and from his bitterly cynical authorial tone, which remains constant from work to work.

Louis-Ferdinand Destouches was born in the lower-class Paris suburb of Courbevoie in 1894, and he never forgot it or let his reader forget it. In his writings, from his first and best novel, *Voyage au bout de la nuit* (*Journey to the End of Night*, 1932) onward, he would adopt the tone of everyday working-class speech, its vigor, its rapidity, its colorful and often excremental or obscene slang. In this regard he was indebted to *Le Feu* (*Under Fire*, 1916) the celebrated war novel by Henri Barbusse. However, Céline went further: quite deliberately he set out to break the classical, rational mode of the French literary language, freely manipulating it and creating new words of his own, transforming the vulgar tongue into a powerful instrument of mocking challenge to convention and hypocrisy. This is the sphere in which his influence has been the most marked and enduring, and not only in France: Céline's American admirers and disciples are numerous.

Despite his stress on his working-class background, his parents, whose misery he exaggerated, did not belong to the laboring classes but to the lower stratum of the bourgeoisie. His father was chief clerk in an insurance company, his mother a struggling shopkeeper in lace goods in the Passage Choiseul, one of the enclosed galleries to be found on the Right Bank. They were able to send their only son, first to Germany and then to England, to learn languages—for, as they thought, commerce. On his return to Paris he worked in a fabric store and then for a well-known jeweler, but he was far too ambitious to settle for this sort of precarious existence in trade. He understood very well the limited outlook of clerks and small tradespeople like his parents. He knew, as he was to write later, that they were not interested in changing the world but in moving up into the solidly established "respectable" middle class. In this ambience, the influence of the Dreyfus Affair and its repercussions would endure. His father read, and conveyed to him, the virulent anti-Semitism of Edouard Drumont's paper, *La Libre Parole*, which enjoyed a wide circulation.

In 1912, seeking a way out of his crippling milieu, young Destouches enlisted for three years in the Twelfth Cuirassiers. There, he could be with horses—he always preferred animals to people because, he claimed, they at least were not corrupt. He thus witnessed in the exposed and vulnerable cavalry in 1914 the terrible conditions and the brutality of the

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early encounters of the war. In October 1914 he was seriously wounded in the right arm while carrying a message under fire, a duty for which he had volunteered. This act of valor won him the Military Medal. He was not wounded in the head, as he later gave others to understand, nor was there any trepanation; but, possibly as a result of being thrown from his horse, he suffered from excruciating pains in the head for the rest of his life. They perhaps go some way toward explaining his relentless use of aggressive language.

Destouches was invalided out of the army, having seen three months of combat, and he spent some while in the hospital. In 1915, he was to be found in London in the passport office, frequenting the petty crooks, pimps, and prostitutes he later depicted in *Guignol's Band* in 1944. It was there that he married Suzanne Nebout in January 1916: this marriage was not annulled, so that his later union with Edith Follet rendered him, in Vitoux's words, "unequivocally a bigamist."

The war was probably the most shattering experience of Céline's life: it colored much that came after. He did not laud its heroism and virile camaraderie, like Montherlant or Drieu La Rochelle. His stance was closer to that of British writers and poets. Pessimistic, cynical, and disillusioned, he was one of the few in France to cut through the patriotic rhetoric, what he was to call in his first novel "the murderous forms of hypocrisy," "the flag-waving religion." Above all, young Destouches was determined not to be a dupe: he shared the deep mistrust ("*méfiance*") ingrained in many of his compatriots. He had looked upon the horrors and cruelties of war, and he never wanted to see them again.

In 1916 Céline took ship for the Cameroons, under contract to a lumber company that held exploitation rights, later parodied as the Compagnie Pordurière, with the stress on *ordure*. He grew to dislike colonialism and set himself up as an amateur doctor to sick Africans. On his return to France in 1917, he obtained a post with the Rockefeller Foundation, giving speeches to combat the scourge of tuberculosis. At Rennes in 1918, he encountered Dr. Follet, whose daughter he married in the following year. Céline had begun to study medicine, studies that culminated in his 1924 thesis on a fellow victim of persecution mania, Ignaz Philipp Semmelweiss, the father of antisepsis, who died insane. Once qualified, Céline went to work in Geneva for the health section of the League of Nations. This work enabled him to travel widely throughout the world.

Meanwhile, he had become attached to Elizabeth Craig, an American dancer. With a Danish dancer, Karen Jensen, they formed a trio. Various other young women followed. He admitted candidly: "I've always liked women to be beautiful and lesbian. Quite pleasant to look at and never tiring me with their sexual needs!" Celine subscribed to the nineteenth-century writer's view, encapsulated by Balzac, that the sexual act depletes a man's sum of energies. "Women are there to drain your sap," said Céline. He owned to enjoying sexual pleasure by being a voyeur.

It was while working as a doctor in Clichy in 1929 that Céline began writing his novel, *Voyage au bout de la nuit*. He had already written a play, *L'Eglise* (*The Church*), targeting colonialism in Africa, as well as everything that offended him in the New York scene and in the League of Nations. This play failed to obtain a hearing, much to his annoyance. (Interestingly, it was announced for the 1992–93 theater season at Nanterre Amandiers). On the other hand, his novel was an immediate success and was proposed for the Goncourt prize. The "disaster" of being passed over simply fueled his paranoia.

The major Célinian themes are already present in his first novel, in the wartime and African episodes in the life of Céline's alter ego, Bardamu, or rather his journey toward death—and in its successor, *Mort à Crédit* (*Death on the Installment Plan*, 1936), which is grounded in the author's early years. For Céline, the supreme truth is death, or more specifically, "my own death." Christianity, Catholicism, religion itself, together with optimistic illusions, such as progress and "the American way of life" (to which would later be added Soviet "utopia"), are smoke screens, futile attempts to conceal this bitter truth.

On the one hand, things do not change; on the other, all is corruption, decadence, and decline since 1900. "Everything is going to crumble . . . everything is crumbling." We are witnessing the great stampede toward the void. Any hope of better things to come "is nothing else but shit." (The nineteenth-century poet Alfred de Vigny had once phrased

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the same sentiment rather more elegantly when he declared that hope is the greatest of our follies.) The death of an adult means one swine less. "Love is the infinite reduced to the level of poodles." Céline, who adored the beauty of the ballet and ballet dancers, and even composed ballet scenarios (which, much to his fury, were constantly rejected), here stresses foulness and ugliness. Why should there not be as much art in ugliness as in beauty? he inquires, adding: "It is a genre to be cultivated, that's all." The notion suited his temperament admirably. Céline was to cultivate this genre consistently, and so would his disciples.

His view of human beings as toads and vipers, as cruel, selfish, cowardly hypocrites and blind fools, usually without redeeming features of any sort—or at best as miserable creatures to be pitied—allows the author to have the best part. He remains superior to these wretched worms; he alone is gifted with lucidity. The damage done to egotists of middling intelligence by a smattering of Darwin, Nietzsche, Spengler, and their disciples can scarcely be measured. And Céline was an egotist of the first order: everything is always related to himself, his own disappointment, rage, and pain.

The distorted effect of this worldview, clothed in language of extreme aggression, violence, and stunning inventiveness, where exaggeration rules, can be wildly comic in a savage, sour way. Rabelais is often invoked in the same breath with Céline, but the creator of Gargantua and Pantagruel, notwithstanding his monkish satire and taste for the scatological, was also a humanist. There is nothing like the vision of the ideal community of the Abbaye de Thélème in Céline, no blissful equanimity, no trusting "*Fay ce que vouldras*" ("Do as thou wilt"). Céline did not trust anyone much outside his small intimate circle, except the companion of his later years, the ballet dancer Lucette Almansor (whom he was to marry in 1943 after his divorce) and the handsome actor (and anti-Semite) Robert Le Vigan. These would be depicted as naive innocents in a world in chaos.

Céline, who saw right through what he called the "sham and tyranny" of the Soviet system when he visited the USSR in 1936, did not see through Nazism and Fascism, remaining untroubled by their rise and hostile to the anti-Fascist crusade. He took to admiring Hitler, because the Führer was "Aryan" and, like himself, absolutely serious about eliminating the Jews. The 1914–18 war had made Céline not only a convinced pacifist but also a supporter of a Franco-German alliance at all costs. Besides, he could not stand the Popular Front government led by Léon Blum and ministers who were of Jewish origin. Céline took the line of those compatriots of his who actually preferred Hitler to Blum. In that sense, the Nazi Occupation could not really offend them.

Still, as early as the fall of 1940 (a good two years before General Montgomery's victory at El Alamein, the date when most collaborationist intellectuals began to see the writing on the wall), Céline told the Fascist writer Lucien Rebatet, "Vichy is a mirage, smoke and shadow. What is true is that Fritz lost the war." Presumably thinking of Napoleon, Céline declared that an invading army that did not bring revolution with it must lose in the end. His prophetic words possibly owed less to some visionary insight than to his wish to disturb the complacent confidence of an intellectual such as Rebatet and to his own deep-seated misanthropy and pessimism. Céline's anarchistic grousing at whatever was the ruling position upset many of his putative allies. Present at the inauguration of the euphemistically named Institute for the Study of Jewish Affairs in May 1941, shabbily dressed as was his wont, he contrived to sabotage the meeting with his gibes.

When the Allies were approaching Paris in 1944, Céline seriously feared for his life. He knew that he had compromised himself: he had attended one German official reception too many; he had visited Berlin with other doctors; above all, he had said and written too much to escape retribution. With his wife, his friend Le Vigan, and his cat Bébert, he set out for Denmark via Baden-Baden and Sigmaringen, which he persistently named Siegmaringen, making ironic play on *Sieg*, the German for *victory*. In the collapse of Vichy and of the Third Reich, in the total chaos that reigned in Europe, he would find a subject that suited admirably his persecution mania and his misanthropy. This apocalyptic material, rooted in his personal experiences, was to be elaborated in *D'un Château l'autre (From Castle to Castle*, 1957), *Nord (North*, 1960), and

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Rigodon (*Rigadoon*, published posthumously in 1969).

Here the German politicians, the Vichy leaders like Pétain (who "embodied France," said Céline with heavy irony, as he himself "embodied the Passage Choiseul"), and Laval (that "Jew")—along with the collaborationist intellectuals, film actors, and hangers-on—are relentlessly taken to the cleaners in all their folly and vanity. Laval in his office with its First Empire furniture ("that style hard on posteriors," created for military men who do not stay seated long) went on defending his policies as if nothing had changed: Céline claimed that he could not manage to get a word in edgeways.

Always feeling hard done by, Céline was resentful because such writers as Paul Morand and Henry de Montherlant had managed to cover themselves: he overlooked the fact that here were diplomacy and equivocation personified. In Céline's view, he alone was paying for all the other anti-Semites: he was the eternal victim, the martyr, the scapegoat sent into the wilderness. Certainly, he did not have an easy time after the Liberation. Having finally reached Denmark in 1945, he was imprisoned there for eighteen months at the behest of the French government. Still, there was a sense in which Denmark saved him. He did not suffer the same fate as the Fascist writer Robert Brasillach, executed by firing squad, a fellow anti-Semite whom he cordially despised as "that zealous little *Propaganda-Staffel* clerk, that scheming Neronian pansy"—words that were charitably uttered after Brasillach's execution.

Attacked by Sartre, Céline retaliated by ridiculing him time and again as "le Tartre," reincarnation of Molière's foolish, pretentious Trissotin. Once he had found someone to assail, Céline was like a dog with a bone. Others who felt the lash of Céline's tongue included the Catholic novelist, François Mauriac, despite his interventions against the excesses of the purge that followed the Liberation. General Charles de Gaulle himself was mocked as "Charlot" (the French appellation for Charlie Chaplin, and also a name that once spelled "public executioner"); while the fighters who risked their lives in the Resistance or Forces Françaises de l'Intérieur (FFI) were reduced to "les fifis" (the childish word for little boys). To appreciate these jokes one requires a pretty weird sense of humor.

Naturally, Céline the nihilist with his broad, unsubtle brush, was keen on the argument of moral equivalence. After all, it absolved him. For instance, why all this fuss about the extermination of the Jews? In November 1946, he could even brazenly and untruthfully declare: "All things considered in depth, honestly examined, without passion and given the circumstances, the Jews should erect a statue to me for the harm I didn't do them and which I could have done them. They persecute me, I have never persecuted them. . . . In all this business, the impeccable democrat is me." In 1947 he was grieving, not over the murdered victims of the Third Reich, but over "the current sufferings of imprisoned anti-Semites." Besides, what about President Truman and the casualties that resulted from the atom bomb on Hiroshima? Actually Céline cared as much about the Japanese as he did about the Jews. Still, here was a stick with which to beat the democracies and attack their claim to the high moral ground.

Céline and his like had favored the "New Europe" united under Hitler's jackboot: "Yes, I believed we had to create one Europe! And that's exactly what they're trying to do now! Too late!" pontificated Céline in 1957, adding, "When there was a German army we could have made it. With the German army, the last German army. We chucked it all away!" Céline did not discriminate between a Europe under Nazi domination and a Europe of free peoples. His account of his meeting at Sigmaringen with Otto Abetz, the German ambassador under the Occupation, is enlightening. Abetz admitted defeat, but ". . . something of National Socialism will always remain!" he asserted: "Our ideas will resume their force! . . . all their force! . . . We have sown the seed, Céline, sown the seed!" With the current revival of extreme nationalism and the upsurge of neo-Nazism in certain parts of Europe, such sentiments should not be overlooked. Perhaps, for chilling moments like this exchange with Abetz, it is still worth reading Céline—provided one has a strong stomach.

"It is up to each of us," writes Frédéric Vitoux in his ardent case for the defense, "to accept or reject the image, to accept or reject the human race as described by Céline, in its deadly mediocrity, its hatreds, its peevishness, and its all too rare manifestations of tenderness." Quite so. That is evidently the task of

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the critic, or the obligation of the reader, who cannot leave temperament and personal experience at the door. Nihilism has been seen as the great temptation of the age. Amid the horrors and the human tragedies of our terrible century, those in quest of a more just assessment of the value of life must decline the poisoned gift.

Consequently, can we speak of greatness in reference to Céline? Can this steady outpouring of bile, this blinkered self-righteousness and self-concern, this unwavering baseness and nihilism be accounted great? Where are the moments of joy in nature, the counterweight of decency, the deeds of supererogation that can be found in common experience? In an age when such French writers as Malraux, Montherlant, or Camus were seeking a ground for humanism and human values, Céline stands aloof. As for Céline's much-vaunted redemptive style, the extravagant neologisms, the famous three dots, the frenzied clatter of exclamation marks, all these become utterly wearisome in the end after such consistent repetition. It is the same grousing voice that we hear all the time, that of a man who sees the mote in the other's eye but never the beam in his own. Sometimes, we acknowledge the wretched self-confessed "clown" and his clowning, but we are not deceived by the clown's mask, and afterward there is a nasty taste in the mouth.

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Their Thing

ALEXANDER STILLE

MEN OF DISHONOR: INSIDE THE SICILIAN MAFIA. *By Pino Arlacchi. Translated by Marc Romano. Morrow. $23.*

THE SICILIAN MAFIA: THE BUSINESS OF PRIVATE PROTECTION. *By Diego Gambetta. Harvard University Press. $39.95.*

Until the early 1980s, many people—some even in good faith—actually questioned the existence of the Sicilian mafia. The Oxford professor Christopher Duggan wrote that the mafia was a literary invention concocted by Northern Italians to stigmatize the very different Southern Italian culture they discovered after adding Sicily to the new unified Italy in 1860. The mafia label, Duggan argued, was then used by Fascist dictator Benito Mussolini to strike at his political opponents and affirm police control over Sicily. It became fashionable among scholars to insist that the mafia was not an organization but an anthropological phenomenon, a set of values and attitudes common in Sicily: distrust of government authority, a belief in private rather than public justice, a tendency to identify with close friends and family rather than with the abstract concept of the State. The stories of initiation rites, highly structured mafia "families," with "*capi*" and "*consiglieri*"—were nothing more than the fantasy of Hollywood and the sensationalist press.

This skepticism seemed justified by the distinct lull in violent crime in Sicily during the 1970s. Despite the apparent calm, a small number of police officials and prosecutors knew that all was not what it seemed. They had begun to notice suitcases full of drugs and money moving back and forth between Palermo and New York. Rather than disappearing, mafia business was booming as never before. There was little violence because harmony reigned among the Sicilian clans and because they met with little resistance from the Italian government. It was not until the early 1980s, when hundreds of corpses began to litter the streets, several major heroin refineries were discovered, and many of the most prominent crime fighters in Sicily were assassinated, that it became painfully evident that the mafia not only existed but was very well organized indeed.

In the last fifteen years, a veritable revolution has taken place, both within the mafia itself and in the relationship between the Italian State and organized crime. Several fundamental changes have taken place. Drugs became the mafia's most lucrative business. A new, unusually violent faction of the mafia, led by Salvatore Riina, the boss of the town of Corleone, near Palermo, centralized power within Cosa Nostra, establishing a virtual dictatorship and eliminating hundreds of adversaries. In response to the drug epidemic and the unprecedented levels of violence, a new generation of magistrates and police officials mounted the most serious campaign against the mafia since World War II, prosecuting hundreds of *mafiosi* and their bosses. The campaign led to a military counter-offen-

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sive by Cosa Nostra, which murdered many of the most courageous judges, prosecutors, and police officers. In the course of this struggle, the relationship between the Italian State and the mafia gradually changed: a traditionally ambiguous attitude, marked by frequent episodes of complicity and collusion, has finally hardened into a genuine commitment to fight the mafia. Fugitive mafia bosses, who had always eluded capture, were suddenly arrested and, for the first time, a dozen members of parliament were indicted for collusion with the mafia. Last year, Italian police finally captured the greatly feared boss of Corleone, Salvatore (Totò) Riina, and prosecutors also charged seven-time prime minister Giulio Andreotti, perhaps the most powerful politician in recent Italian history, with using his influence to protect the mafia.

Instrumental to this radical transformation in Italian life is another, equally profound change, the sudden willingness, for the first time in history, of Sicilian mafia members to testify in court. Until extremely recently, the idea of a mafia witness was considered in Italy to be a contradiction in terms. When a young *mafioso*, Leonardo Vitale, suffering from a personal and religious crisis, walked into the Palermo police station in 1973 and volunteered to talk about his criminal experience, judges in Sicily sent him to an insane asylum, even though he offered detailed, well-documented evidence about several murders. When he was released many years later, Vitale was quickly murdered, showing that the mafia took Vitale's testimony much more seriously than did the Italian judiciary.

American gangsters, living in the world of Hollywood and Madison Avenue, are, by comparison with their Sicilian counterparts, publicity-minded extroverts. Mob bosses have frequently granted newspaper interviews and complained to reporters about their press coverage. Some, among them Lucky Luciano and Joe Bonnano, actually published books about their careers. Bugsy Siegel thrived in the limelight, cultivated the friendship of movie stars, and even gave a screen test at a film studio. Joe Valachi testified openly about the United States Cosa Nostra during the early 1960s, and American *mafiosi* have been talking ever since.

But in much more tradition-minded Sicily, the strict code of silence, known as *omertà*, held until 1984 when Tommaso Buscetta agreed to cooperate with Palermo prosecutor Giovanni Falcone, assassinated in 1992. Buscetta and other witnesses developed by Falcone were important to the success of the Pizza Connection case and to the current prosecution of the Gambino crime family in New York. Today, there are more than seven hundred former *mafiosi* cooperating with the Italian government—a genuine exodus that testifies to the depth of the historic crisis that threatens the future of Cosa Nostra.

Antonino Calderone, whose memoirs, *Men of Dishonor*, have recently been translated into English, was one of those pioneering mafia witnesses who helped shatter both the wall of *omertà* and the idea of the mafia as a myth. "My name is Antonino Calderone; I'm fifty-six years old and have much to say about the mafia because I belonged to it," the book begins, repeating almost verbatim the first statement Calderone made to Judge Falcone in a French prison on the night of April 9, 1987, when he began his cooperation with the government. The book's editor, the Italian sociologist and mafia expert, Pino Arlacchi, has preserved much of the raw authenticity of Calderone's original prison cell confession.

Calderone and other early witnesses revealed a world that resembled to a remarkable degree that described by journalists, historians, and novelists. The mafia, they insisted, was indeed an organization with extremely strict and highly evolved rules. Rather than being an invention of Mario Puzo's *Godfather*, there were, in fact, initiation rites in which the head of the "family" pricks the finger of the neophyte and lets it bleed onto a sacred image as the new member swears never to betray Cosa Nostra. The ritual that Calderone and others described in detail was almost identical to accounts recorded more than a hundred years earlier and varied only slightly from one end of Sicily to the other. The mafia, Calderone insisted, was a unified organization and not a scattered bunch of rival gangs with similar customs. The organization has strict rules and a highly evolved chain of command. "A family's hierarchy begins with the men of honor, the 'soldiers,'" Calderone explains. "We've called them soldiers for a long time, even before the film *The Godfather*," Calderone says. (In a case of life imitating art, however, Calderone tells of a mafia boss who copied a scene from *The Godfather* by sending killers

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dressed as doctors to murder a man in the hospital.) The soldiers are bunched in groups of ten led by a captain, who, in turn, reports to the boss of the family, flanked by an underboss and a *consigliere* (counselor). Above all of them is "The Commission," which makes decisions that are binding to all of the more than one hundred mafia families in Sicily. "If . . . an important man has to be hit—a politician or policeman or judge—the decision has to come from the highest level, namely from the regional commission," Calderone says. "This is logical. A murder of this kind can cause harm to everyone." This statement, confirmed by all the mafia witnesses, had enormous consequences for Sicilian Palermo prosecutors. They used it to hold the members of the Commission directly responsible for a series of important assassinations, a winning legal strategy upheld by Italy's highest court.

While previous witnesses had all been from the Sicilian capital of Palermo, Calderone described the mafia's grip on Catania, the island's second largest city. Many believed that the mafia was confined to Western Sicily and that Catania—which once bragged of being the Milan of the South—was free of the phenomenon. As Calderone revealed, Cosa Nostra in Catania dates back at least to the Fascist period, when one of his uncles helped found the city's first mafia family. The story of the Calderone family is the story of the Catania mafia from about 1925 until 1983, when Calderone fled Sicily fearing for his life.

In his confessions, Calderone describes the genuine difficulties the mafia had under the Fascist regime when Mussolini sent Cesare Mori, "the iron prefect," to Palermo. Calderone's *mafioso* uncle was arrested and sent to a penal colony on an island off of Sicily until he escaped and fled to Tunis, where he was later killed by other Sicilian "men of honor" who had settled there. Another uncle of Calderone's helped the Catania mafia get back on its feet after World War II by organizing the smuggling and sale of contraband tobacco. The same smuggling network used for cigarettes was transferred during the 1970s to the much more lucrative trade in heroin.

The virtue of *Men of Dishonor* is that it gives a vivid sense of daily life within the Sicilian mafia, an atmosphere Calderone began to breathe almost from birth. "I began to know the mafia, to understand the mafia, when I saw Pippo, my older brother, who was a man of honor, kiss other men of honor," Calderone says. "Men of honor always kissed each other when they met. They were the only ones who did it." Calderone's admiration for his older brother and his uncle draws him into this world of tight fraternity. Before he is actually sworn in as a member, Calderone's *mafioso* uncle, almost on his deathbed, tries to convince him not to join. In order not to break his vow of secrecy, the uncle is forced to speak in vague, allusive terms. He pointed to a rose that was sitting near his hospital bed and said: "Remember that the thing they'll talk to you about when we get back is like a rose: it's nice to look at, but if you touch it you'll get hurt. . . . Don't accept. . . . You'll be able to walk down a street quietly . . . thinking how strange and funny life is . . . without anyone coming to look for you."

Calderone, of course, ignores his advice, the wisdom of which becomes apparent to him only much later, after his brother has been murdered and his own life has become a terrifying nightmare. The underlying theme of Calderone's book is the gradual degeneration of the Sicilian mafia that led to his own decision finally to abandon Cosa Nostra. Although he sticks closely to his own individual experience, one can see through it the outlines of the larger historic changes that are rocking Cosa Nostra: the rise of the Corleonese mafia, the corrosive effects of the drug trade, the elimination of the "traditional" mafia, and the growing inevitability of cooperating with authorities.

Calderone was in an unusually good position from which to observe these changes. He had been the second in command of the mafia of Catania, while his brother, Pippo Calderone, had been the boss of the city and a member of the Commission. The Calderones were one of the "traditional" mafia families destroyed by the Corleonesi and their allies. His brother's murder in 1978 was an important prelude to the great mafia war of the 1980s that installed the Corleonesi firmly in power.

In many ways, Calderone's brother, Giuseppe (Pippo) Calderone, the former boss of Catania, is the central character of the book. Pippo Calderone is described as a good-hearted *mafioso* of the old school, who used his power to dispense jobs and favors to the long

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The 1994 Phi Beta Kappa Book Awards

The Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science

BLACK HOLES AND TIME WARPS: EINSTEIN'S OUTRAGEOUS LEGACY. *Kip S. Thorne. Norton. $30.*

Citation: Kip Thorne, the Feynman Professor of Theoretical Physics at the California Institute of Technology, received the Phi Beta Kappa Award in Science for his book *Black Holes and Time Warps,* a monumental work on the intellectual and experimental foundations of black holes. It gives an excellent account of how modern cosmology, with the help of diverse sharp minds and sensitive instruments, has probed the universe and provided images of what is there—the overall structure as well as the fine details. Its historical perspective not only provides vivid impressions of the people involved, but reveals how the interplay of bright ideas, blunders, jokes, rivalries, and teamwork ultimately led to incredible discoveries. The diagrams it contains are helpful in allowing the non-professional to better grasp concepts and to better understand the controversies and advances that have taken place in the field of cosmology.

The Christian Gauss Award

THE MYSTERY TO A SOLUTION: POE, BORGES, AND THE ANALYTIC DETECTIVE STORY. *John T. Irwin. The Johns Hopkins University Press. $36.95.*

Citation: John Irwin's *The Mystery to a Solution* is an extraordinary book with a lucid and witty style that considers a wide range of important literary, philosophical, and theoretical subjects. Its audience will be anyone interested in Poe, Borges, the detective story, Lacan and psychology, anthropology, philosophy, literary theory, modernism, game theory, the occult, the classics, mythology, the history of science, music, the fine arts, and the history and literature of the Americas. John T. Irwin is Professor of English and Chairman of the Writing Seminars at The Johns Hopkins University.

The Ralph Waldo Emerson Award

W. E. B. DU BOIS: BIOGRAPHY OF A RACE, 1868–1919. *David Levering Lewis. Henry Holt and Company. $35.*

Citation: David Levering Lewis's *W. E. B. Du Bois* is a significant scholarly and literary achievement, a monumental work. Professor Lewis is a scholar who writes not only for the academy but also for the general reader. In this work, in which Du Bois is given the full treatment he deserves, Lewis writes with a balance between admiration and critical detachment. He demystifies the biographer/historian's methods by openly sharing with the reader the nature of his research and sources just as he demystifies Du Bois and American culture. He restores Du Bois to his proper place in American and African-American thought, and in narrating the life of Du Bois, Lewis helps us to understand our society and ourselves and the interplay between culture and identity.

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stream of ordinary citizens that lined up outside his office each day without ever asking for a nickel in return. He extorted money only from large businesses and not from small shopkeepers. Within the mafia he was a "moderate" who tried to keep the peace among the families and to make sure that everyone played by the rules set down by the Commission. (Calderone mentions, but downplays, Pippo's involvement in drug trafficking and murder.) He killed only when necessary and shared the profits of drug trafficking liberally with other members of the family. His protégé and rival was a ruthless young *mafioso* named Nitto Santapaola, who became the boss of Catania when Pippo Calderone was elevated to the regional Commission. While the elder Calderone was acting as mafia diplomat, Santapaola was taking care of business at home, making millions in heroin smuggling, establishing himself as the chief enforcer for the leading Catania businessmen, and increasing his military strength by carefully building a private army that was loyal exclusively to him. Santapaola's strategy was similar to that of his friend and ally Totò Riina, who broke traditional mafia rules by keeping the members of his organization secret and lying about his activities to other bosses.

Calderone describes well the way in which his brother was gradually weakened and isolated by his rival and the constant, palpable fear of sudden death that came to dominate their lives. One day, the elder Calderone discovered a bomb inside his car. He called his own mafia explosives expert, but when the man defused the bomb in a matter of minutes, the Calderones began to suspect that the bomb was an inside job, planted by members of their own family. Despite this episode, Pippo Calderone was convinced that Santapaola, who had asked him to be godfather to his children, would never kill him. "He believed in the rules of Cosa Nostra and trusted his friends," writes Antonino Calderone of his brother. "It was because of this that he died."

The somewhat romantic dichotomy of the old "good" mafia and the new "bad" mafia can be misleading. Calderone himself describes a meeting with one of Palermo's "moderate" bosses, who excuses himself for being late to a meeting because he had to fix a flat tire and strangle someone along the way.

But it is undeniable that life within the mafia has become more dangerous and that the violent struggle to control the drug trade has eroded the culture of internal solidarity that kept the ranks of the mafia compact. (Some 401 murders took place in Palermo between 1978 and 1984, while "only" 128 were committed during a previous mafia war in the 1960s.) In the past, an able mafia boss might very well die peacefully in his bed as a respected member of the community, with politicians, clergymen, and schoolchildren following his coffin to its final rest. Today's mafia boss is far richer and more powerful, moving tens of millions of dollars or blowing up government buildings with a nod of his head. But, increasingly, he lives like a hunted animal, in constant fear of either being captured by the police or being assassinated by one of his own associates.

Calderone was the first mafia witness to give extensive firsthand descriptions of the new leadership of the mafia, the Corleonesi and their allies, who are indeed an unusually bloodcurdling group. This is his portrait of Luciano Leggio, the leader of the Corleone mafia until his arrest in 1974.

> He liked to kill. He had a way of looking at people that could frighten anyone, even us *mafiosi*. The smallest thing set him off, and then a strange light would appear in his eyes that created silence around him. When you were in his company you had to be careful about how you spoke. The wrong tone of voice, a misconstrued word, and all of a sudden that sudden silence. Everything would instantly be hushed, uneasy, and you could smell death in the air.

Calderone's account of Leggio's successor, Totò Riina, is in some ways even more chilling. After his brother's murder, the mafia held a banquet to honor him, given by the very men who had had him killed. Riina—who had almost certainly given his blessing to the murder—delivered a highly emotional eulogy of Pippo Calderone that moved some in the room to tears.

Revelations about the collusion between the mafia and members of the Italian government, a delicate area into which Tommaso Buscetta had refused to tread, made up another important element of Calderone's confessions. He described how he and his brother prepared Christmas gifts each year for the city's leading judges and politicians, met with

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police officials and even members of the national parliament. The Calderone brothers met with Salvatore Lima, a member of the Italian parliament, in order to ask him to transfer an overly zealous police official from Catania. Lima, who was murdered by the mafia in 1992, was a close adviser to former prime minister Andreotti.

Antonino Calderone's confessions are thus one of the most important documents of the recent war against the mafia in Italy. The great strength and weakness of *Men of Dishonor* is that it is as much a document as a book. Arlacchi has captured the immediacy of Calderone's prison-cell confessions, but in many places the book still has the raw quality of an unedited document. Important characters are introduced without their first names or with inadequate or incorrect identification: for example, Mussolini's chief mafia fighter, Cesare Mori, is simply referred to as "Prefect Mori" and then is incorrectly referred to by Calderone as the "head of the Justice Department," a position he never occupied. He refers to a fellow Catanian *mafioso* as "a certain Ferrera, who was nicknamed '*Cavadduzzu*' and was the father of the celebrated Ferrera brothers." We are not told what the Sicilian nickname *Cavadduzzu* means (it means little horse), nor are we told why his sons were "celebrated."

The book assumes a broad general knowledge of the mafia in Sicily that most American readers do not possess. Some may become dizzy under the barrage of obscure names and their tangled interrelationships. It is assumed, for example, that the reader knows (as most Italians do) who Salvatore Lima was, and therefore his relationship with former prime minister Andreotti is not mentioned in the text. Without that knowledge, the story Calderone tells of his meeting with Lima loses much of its significance: it may seem just another example of Italian corruption rather than a crucial link in establishing connections between the mafia in Sicily and the highest levels of government in Rome. The sense of foreboding the book succeeds in creating depends, in part, on an awareness of the bloodbath that followed the events Calderone narrates and on the knowledge that many of the people whose names crowd the text are men doomed to extermination.

These problems could have been solved with a good introduction to the English-language edition that situated Calderone's confessions in their historic context, with editorial notes identifying certain people, clarifying key events, and correcting Calderone's occasional factual errors. For instance, Calderone, in talking about a major mafia crackdown in Sicily in the 1960s, says that "more than a hundred" people were arrested. In fact, nearly two thousand suspected *mafiosi* were arrested, which helps one to understand Calderone when he says that, as a consequence, Cosa Nostra decided to suspend all activity and dissolve its governing Commission for several years. Unfortunately, Arlacchi's introduction is brief and quite general, and the editorial notes are too few and too spare. To make matters worse, the translation is rather wooden and awkward, so that the book loses some of the original Italian's colloquial tone. The translator, Marc Romano, has chosen an overly literal approach, leading to a Latinate prose that is far from the informal speech of an uneducated *mafioso.* For example, the term "*automobile blindata*" is translated as "armored automobile," instead of "bulletproof car." Romano has Calderone saying "I love the cinema," making him seem like a connoisseur of avant-garde films rather than a gas station owner and professional gangster who likes going to the movies. At one point, he translates the Italian word for *criminal*, "*delinquente*," as "delinquent," which is far too mild a term to describe a man with seventeen murders under his belt.

But if one does not get distracted by these problems and understands the way in which Calderone's confessions fit into the emerging history of the mafia of the last thirty years, then one can appreciate the power and importance of the story he has to tell.

A book that may act as a valuable complement to *Men of Dishonor* is a scholarly analysis of the phenomenon, *The Sicilian Mafia,* by Diego Gambetta, an Italian sociologist who teaches at Cambridge University. Drawing on the confessions of various mafia witnesses, including Calderone's, Gambetta tries to provide an intellectual framework in which to analyze the nature and behavior of the mafia. Gambetta wants to remove the mafia phenomenon from the realm of mythology and folklore to that of social science. "Archaic codes,

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brutal executions, obscure symbols, blood ceremonies: the mafia's manifestations appear so bizarre that it is natural to see them as remnants of a defunct subculture . . . the *mafiosi* themselves fueled and exploited this mythology to increase their power of intimidation." The mafia, Gambetta believes, is best understood as a "set of firms" that sell a product: protection. "Understanding protection as a commodity helps us make sense of the mafia's activities and attitudes," he writes. "It helps us see the intelligence gathering, the secrecy, the violence, even the religious processions as means of dealing in this particular commodity."

In this schema, the mafia rituals of recruitment and initiation, while tapping archaic Sicilian popular sources, serve a definite business purpose: "Their function," Gambetta writes, "is presumably to transmit a shared symbolic language, an esprit de corps, a sense of belonging and differentiation akin, *mutatis mutandis*, to that transmitted by, say, IBM to its recruits." The mafia's private name *Cosa Nostra* (Our Thing) is like a company trademark, and its careful rules for presenting members to one another is a means of distinguishing the authentic product from cheap imitations. Gambetta quotes Calderone on this point: "It's important to distinguish between the true mafiosi—those of Cosa Nostra—and the others. . . . We are the elite of the criminal world. We're vastly superior to common criminals. We're worse than everybody!"

Gambetta compares the different mafia "families" to owners of a business franchise with the license to use the company trademark on their own territory. Those who infringe on the company copyright (common criminals who try to usurp mafia functions) must be punished in order to protect the trademark's value. The small favors and displays of power that the mafia performs for the benefit of local residents (returning stolen goods or punishing a small-time criminal) are useful advertising like "free wine tastings," meant to attract new customers.

This model is helpful, for example, in explaining the *mafiosi*'s obsession with respect and reputation and Cosa Nostra's use of violence. Because protection is an intangible product, whose value is in the eye of the customer, credibility is everything. The mafia boss avoids resorting to violence as long as people respect his reputation for controlling events in his area. If something occurs on his territory without his knowledge or against his wishes (a robbery, an extortion, a killing), his credibility is at stake. Either he protects his reputation by punishing or intimidating the wrongdoer or he will be perceived as vulnerable and quickly replaced by rivals either inside or outside his own organization. In the protection business, the mafia's clients (shopkeepers and merchants) must believe that it has the power to ensure (or endanger) their physical safety as well as sometimes to offer a competitive advantage by intimidating rivals. If that perception collapses, people cease paying for protection.

While this sociological model may at first seem somewhat improbable, it does have a grounding in historical reality. Gambetta (along with other respected scholars) attributes the mafia's origins to the "lack of trust" endemic to Southern Italian life. More than two thousand years of foreign conquerors (from the Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans to the Arabs, French, Spanish, and Italians) have taught most Sicilians to regard government with suspicion and hostility. Justice was frequently administered not by rule of law but by the private armies of Sicily's feudal landlords. The mafia draws on a code of behavior—the refusal to cooperate with police authorities, the preference for private rather than public justice—that can be traced back for centuries.

But, as Gambetta correctly stresses, if the mafia's roots are ancient, as a form of organization it is a product of modernity, of the new freedom and opportunity of unified Italy. (It is not an accident that the word *mafia* enters the Italian vocabulary in the 1860s, just after Northern troops made Sicily part of the newly united Italy.) There was little room for organized crime in the highly static world of feudalism, where the landowners had a virtual monopoly over both economic resources and the use of violence. (In the early nineteenth century, all private land was in the hands of some two thousand large landowners and it was illegal to sell land.) The breakup of the great feudal estates, the confiscation of church land, and the expansion of trade opened up possibilities for the lower classes to participate in the confused grab for wealth that followed unification. With no tradition of law or public administration to fall back on, violence or the

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threat of violence became the easiest way to gain a leg up on the competition. In a land where government has never been particularly effective or well liked, where physical safety and rule of law have always been in doubt, there has been a thriving market for those offering "protection."

Gambetta is right to emphasize protection as one of the elements that distinguishes the mafia from other forms of organized crime. But, at times, in order to make his business-organization model work, he ignores elements of mafia business that do not fit his theory. The most obvious example is drug trafficking, in which the mafia has been for some time an importer, manufacturer (through refineries), and exporter. Moreover, even before drugs became such an important source of income, starting in the 1950s and 1960s, the mafia has been deeply involved in the real-estate industry, as owners, developers, and contractors. Along with "protecting" and extorting other businesses, the mafia has become a major economic player and employer in its own right. When Italian police tracked the legal assets of one of Palermo's estimated twenty-five mafia families, they identified about $400 million in property, everything from clothing stores to apartment buildings. Gambetta has also treated the political dimension of the mafia rather lightly. While protection has remained an important part of mafia business, the mafia is a highly complex reality that has changed over time and continues to evolve, which makes it extremely difficult to fit it into a single cookie-cutter theory.

Another peril of the sociological approach is that, from time to time, it leads Gambetta into the swamp of pseudo-scientific prose: "Suppose P1—whether buyer or seller—feels dissatisfied with M1's services, say, because he believes that M1 is favoring P2's interests over his own. Suppose further that no complaint on the part of P1 has had any effect on M1. Three outcomes are then possible."

On the whole, however, *The Sicilian Mafia* is a well-written and well-reasoned book. And if Gambetta's model is too reductive, it does offer us a valuable new lens through which to see Cosa Nostra. Like any lens, by its very nature, it blurs some elements as it brings others into focus. But it can be helpful in making sense of the messy and violent reality of the lives of such men as Antonino Calderone.

Copyrights and Wrongs

©OPYRIGHT, FAIR USE, AND THE CHALLENGE FOR UNIVERSITIES. *By Kenneth D. Crews. University of Chicago Press. $22.50.*

Reviewed by HAROLD ORLANS

"Courts and legal scholars have commented that the fair use provisions of the [1976] Copyright Act are . . . vague and difficult," notes the American Library Association Model Policy Concerning College and University Photocopying. Without vague or conflicting provisions, many laws that attempt to reconcile conflicting interests would not be passed. The conflict between copyright owners and users—between writers, publishers, and firms that produce, own, and sell books, journals, and computer software and faculty (including many of the same writers), copyshops, librarians, and students who (properly and improperly) copy them—is plain. It can be a conflict between merchant and customer over price; between merchant and shoplifter; between cautious administrators and heedless copiers; between the constitutional right of copyright protection and burgeoning technologies that make piracy as easy as microwave cooking.

When the definition of "fair use" is vague, each side in the conflict has good reason to promote and act upon its own view of the right definition. Of late, publishers have done so with notable success. They won significant court victories in 1983, when New York University, settling a copyright infringement suit, accepted restrictions on photocopying that were then adopted by other universities; in 1991, when Kinko's was found guilty of copyright infringement for reproducing chapters in "coursepack" anthologies; and in 1994, when Michigan photocopy operator James Smith was fined for paying publishers only a fraction of royalties that he considered too high. Kenneth Crews suggests that, by facilitating royalty payments for photocopying, the Copyright Clearance Center represents another victory, since its "university program can be construed as a serious limitation on fair use."

✪ HAROLD ORLANS, editor of *The Independent Scholar* newsletter, has recently edited *Lawrence of Arabia: Strange Man of Letters.*

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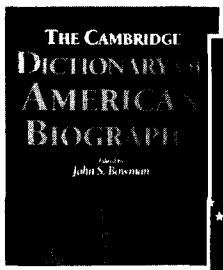

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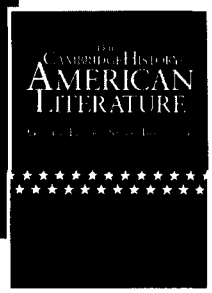

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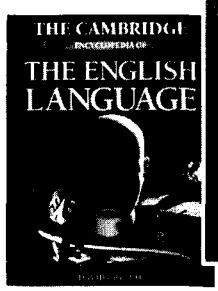

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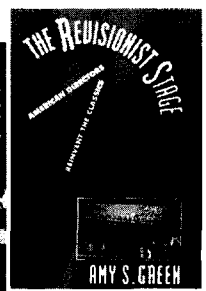

This book explores the vision and talents of a controversial group of artists who, depending on one's perspective, either revitalized or disfigured the standard dramatic repertoire by adapting canonical dramas for the contemporary American stage. First setting out comprehensive overviews of the medium from a variety of perspectives, Green goes on to present a critical history that features bold directorial ventures. Her critique ranges from Greek and Roman plays to plays by Shakespeare and Molière, and the operas of Mozart and da Ponte.

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Senior academic administrators are supposed to set policies that observe the law and advance institutional objectives; counsel are supposed to clarify the institution's legal obligations and protect it from liability. Yet the copying policies of many universities are fragmented, nominal, or too readily yield fair use rights that should be defended. "If you don't *use* fair use, you will *lose* it," a U.S. Register of Copyrights warned.

Crews, a San Jose State University business law professor, has performed a valuable service by carefully and fairly examining the legal background and current (well, recent) status of copying policies at major universities. He discusses the rights and limits of classroom and library copying indicated or obfuscated by the 1976 Copyright Act; the Act's legislative history; the quasi-legal Classroom Guidelines (endorsed by a group of educational associations and the Association of American Publishers) that specify elements of university photocopying Congress did not enact but the House report on the Act nonetheless printed; the effects of the NYU and Kinko cases in narrowing the prevailing interpretation of fair use; and the development of more liberal, rival guidelines by the University of Wisconsin and the American Library Association. Useful appendices give the text of the Classroom Guidelines, the ALA Model Policy, and guidelines for educational copying of music, software, and videotapes.

Crews's distinctive contribution is a meticulous analysis of 183 written copying policies, adopted between 1977 and 1989, that he obtained from 82 universities (all members of the Association of American Universities and/or the Association of Research Libraries). The issues dealt with are copying for reserve room, classroom, research, and library purposes, for interlibrary loan, and the copying of music, videotapes, and computer software. Another 16 universities, Crews says, evidently had no written policy on copying. Is it credible that, in that period, Columbia, Georgetown, and Duke had *no* photocopying policy whatsoever or that Cal Tech and Carnegie Mellon had none on copying software? More likely, Crews did not contact the right person or that person did not send a written "policy" whose actual implementation was, in any event, undetermined.

Crews leans toward a liberal definition of fair use in non-profit institutions' copying for education or research. What that means in concrete terms, in the number of copies and the amount or percent of a copyright book, journal, article, or (God forbid) poem that may be reproduced for classroom use, he does not say (unlike the Classroom Guidelines, which, being precise, can be unreasonable). As he makes clear, too many factors intervene to make such rules sensible in too many cases. And a specific case, such as that of Kinko's, a for-profit business, can be a poor basis for establishing a general policy for non-profit universities.

The general picture that emerges is one of librarians and administrators, inexpert in copyright law and fearing a suit, adopting policies promoted by publishers and posting warning notices near copying machines, talismans against evil, rather than taking an independent stand on their own judgment of the law and the best interests of higher education.

It is noteworthy that the University of Wisconsin's independent policy, from which the ALA model policy was derived, was initiated by John Stedman, a member of the Wisconsin law faculty and copyright law expert who had worked five years for the Senate subcommittee on copyright issues. Confident in his knowledge of the law and opposing the Classroom Guidelines "as too restrictive and as representing only the publishers' views" (albeit endorsed by the American Council on Education), Stedman helped to write a policy that accents the positive, notes permissible areas of unrestricted copying, and drops such quantitative Guidelines standards as "1,000 words or 10 percent . . . , whichever is less."

The University of Wisconsin has not been sued for copyright infringement. However, institutions are constantly being sued by employees and students for discrimination, harassment, negligence, and other real or imagined offenses. Should they not risk, indeed invite a suit to define more clearly the scope of fair use in research and education? Broader free use, accompanied by expedited permission arrangements and stricter measures against improper copying, might make for a new compact with authors and publishers.

Crews gives a clear analysis of the law and formal university policies, but says nothing about the practices of faculty, students, and librarians, the people who actually make, or-

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der, or buy copies with and without permission.

A friend, recently a graduate student and instructor at a large state university, tells me that faculty commonly break the rules by buying software at an educational discount and using it in their own business. Illegal copying of low-priced software is rampant. Expensive software is protected by an encryption code, too difficult to crack, usable only on a particular, licensed computer. The debatable issue of making multiple copies of certain copyright material is circumvented by setting one copy out, which any student can copy.

I myself have usually made multiple copies of my own articles, rather than pay the excessive journal charge for reprints. That can hurt the frail finances of a journal. One valuable journal has raised its price high enough to balance its costs, but only libraries subscribe and their number is declining because of inter-library cooperation: one library makes copies of requested articles for several others; the journal receives trivial payments for permission it has *not* granted. So the journal will raise its price again and subscriptions will decline further. This situation is widespread, and it is small consolation to suffering journals that, for each that expires, two are born.

Crews does not discuss the mystifying policies of university archives. Why will the University of Texas Ransom Humanities Center and the University of Buffalo library not provide even one photocopy of a holograph letter without written permission of the copyright owner, whereas the Harvard, Yale, and Princeton libraries will readily supply copies of whatever letters you request? Are public university lawyers too cautious? Do public librarians want to increase the number of visiting scholars, who can copy by hand whatever they like?

Then there is the often excruciating experience of seeking permission to reproduce copyright matter from publishers, who can be as negligent in answering queries as they are diligent in requesting them. Not long ago, I sought permission to reprint substantial extracts from several newspaper stories. *The New York Times* would not grant permission on the basis of an identified article and author, but required a copy of the article with the extract marked; it charged $35. *The Wall Street Journal* made no charge but required the entire article to be printed intact. *The Washington Post* did not reply. After more than a month, I phoned and heard a recorded message that a reply would be sent in six days, please do not write again. When the *Post*'s worthy ombudsman persuaded the permissions editor to call, she said she had not replied because the *Post* did not hold the copyright.

Is it the knowledge that it could not conduct its business satisfactorily if it observed the law it imposes on others that leads Congress to disregard copyright in its own operations? What would *The Congressional Record* cost, how long would it be delayed, how much thinner would it be if permission had to be obtained and royalties paid on all its copyright matter?

Burdensome, needless, and misplaced requests for permissions are one result of greater restrictions on free use. More selective copying, more paraphrasing, and poorer scholarship with fewer citations and indexes (that offer ready clues to copyright lawyers) may follow. Will clandestine copyshops, onshore pirates, arise to undersell over-priced texts?

The full effects upon scholarship of tighter copyright controls, higher prices for legitimate publications, and the greater ease, cheapness, and dispersion of illegitimate copying have yet to be grasped.

Out of Luck

THE HOMELESS. *By Christopher Jencks. Harvard University Press. $17.95.*

Reviewed by JOSEPH ADELSON

This book began as a long review of other books, and it shows its origins—its modest scope (despite the expansive title) and its general succinctness. It is an excellent work—thoughtful, evenhanded, lucid—yet in a better world it need not have been written. A great deal of it is devoted to the correction of error, and necessarily so, since its topic provides a consummate example of how politics corrupts knowledge in the social sciences today. In the literature on homelessness we find, everywhere we look, misdirection, inaccuracy, and at times outright falsehood.

✪ JOSEPH ADELSON is Professor of Psychology at the University of Michigan. He is writing a book on the politics of psychology.

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Consider Christopher Jencks's opening queries: How many homeless persons are there in this country, and has the number increased in recent years? Those may seem fairly simple questions, but in fact they are not. Almost by definition, many of the homeless are transient or elusive and therefore hard to count. One must also decide who is to be included in the category. Those living on the streets, or in subways, or under bridges, or in public shelters should clearly be counted. But what about those doubled up with relatives? Or those who can pay for a hotel room most of the time, but must make do with a shelter or the park now and again?

These can be vexing problems, yet oddly enough they are not the central reason we have found it so hard to get accurate figures. The numbers of homeless given by putative authorities show an astonishing range, from a quarter million to three million. The figure you were most likely to see in the press until recently was two to three million—which we now know was plucked out of the air by the late Mitch Snyder, the pioneer activist of homelessness—and then repeated by sympathetic journalists until it achieved something close to virtual reality. We also now know that the more careful the count, the lower the figure, and that the most plausible number is one-fifth to one-tenth of Snyder's. He may or may not have believed his own datum, but he certainly did know the score, stating quite openly that he could not get sufficient attention to the homeless unless he could produce crisis numbers.

What we see here is a kind of Iron Law, wherein politically fashionable troubles are inflated; hence, the "estimated" frequency of rape, child abuse, spouse abuse, heterosexual and/or teenage AIDS, and assaults on the self-esteem of girls. The more trouble, the more funding. We have recently seen an interesting example of the process, when the staggering number of seven million homeless was offered by none other than the secretary of HUD, that figure having been arrived at by adding up all cases of homelessness over a period of years. It is not surprising that this estimate accompanied a requested increase in the department's budget.

The confusion about numbers is far less revealing than the often bitter dispute about the nature and sources of homelessness. Who are the homeless? What leads them to their sorry lot in life? Here we find the ideological fevers at their peak. One side looks to the externals, above all to economic misfortune or to a shortage of affordable housing. The homeless are seen as ordinary people fallen on hard times—the unemployed, or the working poor, or single mothers. The other side sees them as unable to cope with the ordinary demands of everyday life because of severe psychological problems—psychosis and its residues, addictions, various deformations of personality. Poverty is the outcome rather than the source.

On this matter, the data are quite clear. Despite variations in methodology, sampling, and so on, all studies concur in finding that a substantial majority of the homeless—around three-quarters—are seriously troubled, suffering severe mental illness, various forms of substance abuse, or other disabling conditions. One might imagine that that would end the argument. But not at all. We have seen over the years a fierce resistance to the evidence, largely through yes-but formulations, some of them half-truths, some simply false: yes, there are some psychotics and drug users, but they do not make up the total; yes, many do abuse drugs, but that is merely a reaction to the stresses of being homeless; and yes, in the past the homeless were the emotionally disturbed, but they will soon be outnumbered by those victimized by the system.

What matters here is not the disagreement alone but its vehemence. Underlying the debate there is a moral argument on whether or not the homeless are innocents who must have our full support without our questioning motives or character. In one form or another, the argument has had a long history, centuries old, as we learned from Gertrude Himmelfarb's brilliant discussion in *The Idea of Poverty*. How ought we construe the very poor? Are they merely "ragged" or are they "dangerous"? Are they deserving or not?

Much of the commentary on the poor, then as now, slides all too easily into sentimentality or moral posturing. Blessedly, there is almost none of that to be found in Christopher Jencks's book. It is remarkably free of cant. It is plainspoken, concrete. Wherever possible it disaggregates the category "homeless" and instead speaks of social or economic types—single adult men, or young unmarried mothers, or the mentally ill, or those abusing drugs.

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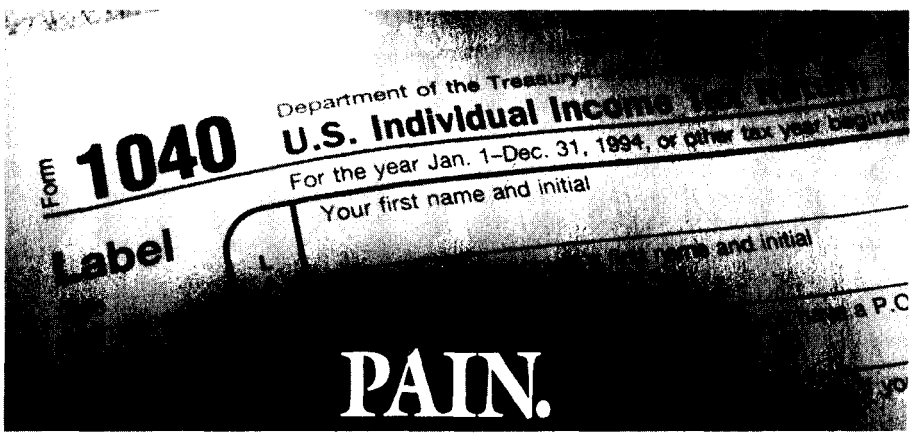

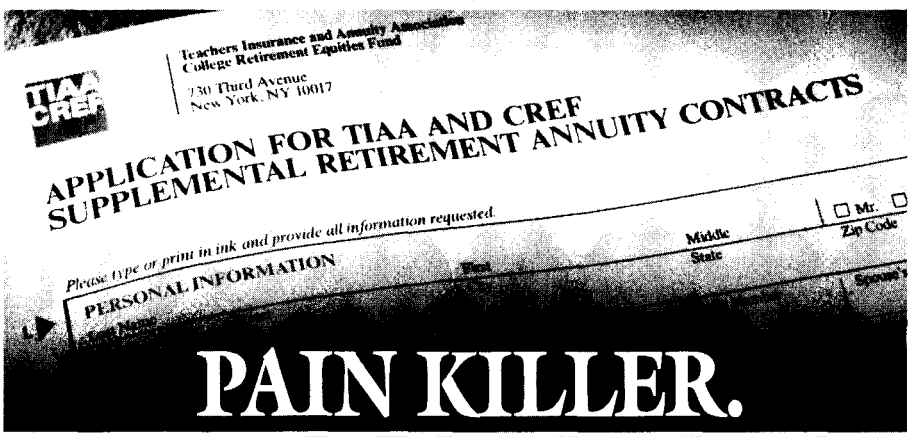

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Each of these (and others) is a separate problem, with its own complexities and possible solutions.

Rather than quarreling with the evidence, Jencks follows it. He does not deny that many of today's homeless were in fact emptied out of the mental hospitals. He gives us a brief but careful account of how and why the asylums were abandoned, citing both the good and the bad reasons, and what the results have been, again both good and bad. He recognizes the important part played by alcohol and drug addiction and, indeed, gives special emphasis to the arrival of crack cocaine—inexpensive and easily available—as a factor in the apparent increase in homelessness. He then turns to demography and economics, along with the cultural changes these have induced—changes in the job market (for both men and women), in the housing market (especially the destruction of skid rows), and in marriage and motherhood. These analyses are at the heart of the book and are a pleasure to read, given Jencks's grasp of the bitter irony behind the unexpected costs of good intentions. To give just one example, he demonstrates how improvements in the shelter system may increase the problem by providing incentives for those on the margin.

What has led to the spread of homelessness? Jencks sees different influences for single adults and families. For the former, he singles out five changes: "the elimination of involuntary commitment, the eviction of mental hospital patients who have nowhere to go, the advent of crack, increases in long-term joblessness, and political restrictions on the creation of flophouses." Among families, he notes the increase of single motherhood, the decrease in welfare payments, and (possibly) the emergence of crack.

What can be done? Here again Jencks is careful to differentiate among types and offers separate solutions for single men, the mentally ill, abandoned families, and so on. Here again he keeps us aware of the complexities. For example, many of the homeless avoid shelters because they are dangerous or chaotic. They must be kept free of crime and drug use if they are to be habitable, yet if you set standards too high you discourage some acceptable clients. Raising benefits may solve some problems, but the general public, already resentful of costs, may resist. Just as it dispels many myths about the sources of homelessness, so this book dispels any illusions about a quick and easy fix. Jencks is at most a modest meliorist. You finish this book feeling that we can tidy up the problem, but only within limits. Housing programs are necessary, "but they will not work miracles." Services to help with addictive problems and job skills may help some of the time, but we do not yet know which ones work and why.

The book's limitations stem from its brevity. There are only 122 pages of text, and at this length even so pithy a writer as Jencks can touch only lightly on some important issues. In particular, the psychosocial questions are scanted. Will, for example, the continuing deterioration of the traditional family lead to an increasing number of devastated personalities without resources and competencies? Will the seemingly inexorable rise in single motherhood produce the state of "speciation" Senator Moynihan has warned us about, and, if so, what then? These questions are beyond Christopher Jencks's intentions in *The Homeless*, which is our loss. It would be good to see his keen mind at work on them.

A Religious Wal-Mart

GOD'S PLAGIARIST: BEING AN ACCOUNT OF THE FABULOUS INDUSTRY AND IRREGULAR COMMERCE OF THE ABBÉ MIGNE. *R. Howard Bloch. University of Chicago Press. $24.95.*

Reviewed by JONATHAN M. ELUKIN

We can easily imagine that the workers in the Abbé Migne's nineteenth-century Parisian printing house, laboring for a pittance in the midst of the din of steam-driven presses and churning out volume after volume of the collected works of the Church Fathers, resented their taskmaster but were grateful for the work. Generations of scholars have no doubt felt a similar mixture of exasperation and gratitude to Migne as they slogged through the seemingly endless volumes, now dusty and brittle, of the *Patrologia Latina* or *Patrologia*

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Graeca. Migne's collection opened the door to the textual patrimony of the Church, but, like Migne himself, the sheer unstoppable massiveness of the series still overwhelms.

In his biographical sketch of Migne, the medieval literary scholar R. Howard Bloch calls him "God's plagiarist," and the name is apt. Migne cut and pasted the *Patrologia Latina* (218 volumes, 1844–1855) and *Patrologia Graeca* (166 volumes, 1857–1866), along with hundreds of other volumes of texts in the *Bibliothèque universelle du clergé*, from previously published editions that were either in the public domain or so obscure that no charges of plagiarism could be effectively brought against him. Bloch sees in Migne's desire to reproduce older editions not simply a way of making an easy *sou*, but creating a kind of neutral authority for the collection.

In a talmudic way, the disparate texts were eternal and independent of a particular editorial authority. There was no one voice behind the texts that might have prompted controversy. The approach was obviously a success. Many of Migne's texts are now being replaced by more modern scientific editions, but throughout the nineteenth and much of the twentieth century, Migne's series held pride of place in any serious library of Church history.

Migne himself was no great scholar, but he was a fantastic businessman, and his *Ateliers catholiques* was more of a religious Wal-Mart than simply a publishing house. Migne not only reproduced old editions of patristic texts, but sold reproductions of religous art as well. In one promotional piece, he assured his future clientele that the "*Ateliers catholiques* undertakes to fabricate all kinds of religious paintings at the lowest possible price and in a manner worthy of religion." As with his publishing enterprise, what counted was the "wholesale" price-quality ratio, as we can see in his assessment of one religious painting: "If one wants *Stations of the Cross* at a lower price, one could find them, but neither the material or the manufacture could be as serious." Essentially using the sale of the *patrologies* as a front, Migne lent at interest to the clergy and built a centralized clearinghouse for the illegal sale of masses. People would pay Migne a small sum for a mass, and he would then contract with a local priest for a much smaller sum to say the mass. He might arrange to pay the priest with volumes of the *Bibliothèque* offered at a discount.

Migne tried to seduce his subscribers with finely tuned deals—anticipating our mail-order book clubs—that promised discounts for early or complete purchases, and with low prices that were the result of his scrupulously controlled outlays of capital. In other words, Migne was fantastically cheap. Bloch plays on the irony of a religious publisher immersed in these nakedly commercial details. Migne the publicist also manipulated newspapers to print celebratory testimonial accounts or prospectuses of his publishing projects, most of which seem to have been ghostwritten by Migne or his minions. (One testimony reads: "Thus the most learned commentators, the most profound theologians, the most eloquent apologists of religion, the most exalted ascetic writers, an entire tradition, so to speak, will pass at little cost from the presses of M. Migne to your library shelves, and you will find there weapons to combat error, and sure rules to lead the souls of the elect along the paths of the highest perfection.")

Migne's boldness and rapaciousness were surely Balzacian, as Bloch nicely illustrates in recurring references to Balzac's novel of journalism, *Illusions perdues*, but Bloch unavoidably deflates his hero by setting him so neatly in the cultural context of nineteenth-century production and merchandising. Migne was only one actor in the larger technological and marketing innovations that swept through publishing, department stores, and the commercialization of culture. For example, collections of the works of Voltaire and other national "treasures" of France had appeared during the early 1800s. They were marketed not individually by volume, but sequentially and by subscription. This was, according to Bloch, "a sales technique that is not unfamiliar to, in fact is the very essence of, Migne's marketing of the Church Fathers. What this means, again, is that the director of the *Ateliers catholique* invented less than he assimilated the marketing trends of the time."

What makes Migne interesting is that he applied his seemingly innate commercial skills to the particular goal of preserving the intellectual heritage of the Church in an increasingly secular society. Money was, to paraphrase Bloch's own quip, only the Mignes to the end. For Migne, who was a bizarre mixture of medi-

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eval monk and proto-tycoon, money could not be allowed to rest any more than he himself could sleep. He called for unused funds of the clergy to be invested with him: "It is thus at once a useful and worthy act, for those whose funds sleep unproductively, to consecrate them for a while to the increasingly rapid printing of the *Bibliothèque universelle du clergé.*" His publishing was a holy enterprise to the glory of God—and profit kept the glory alive. The drive to publish perhaps came, Bloch imagines, from Migne's early encounter with a bishop in his native province. Migne's first literary efforts protesting the anti-Church policies of the state were apparently squashed by this local bishop, and Migne spent the rest of his life seeking revenge. Revenge for Migne was to drown the Church in books. It is odd, though, that a man who was so resistant to established authority and hierarchy would spend his life promoting the canonical authorities of the Christian tradition.

Bloch unfortunately does not really emphasize the most interesting aspect of Migne's work: the indices to the *patrologies.* Bloch only touches upon them as another example of Migne's obsessive calculation of time and money when he might have set Migne's work in the context of the history of indices. Migne trumpeted the accomplishment of the indices, no doubt to justify the prices he was asking: "Let's assume that a man would have a sufficiently quick judgment, a sufficiently reliable eye, a sufficiently vast intelligence to analyze one of our volumes in fifteen days' time; he would need more than 1,800 years in order to do what we have done in just a few years." However, the indices became, as Migne wrote, the "most extraordinary thing in the world since one invented the book, that which surpasses even the 12 tasks of Hercules." It is tempting to agree with him. The tables gave readers access to centuries of Church writings organized around themes that anticipate many of the concerns of modern historians. Glancing through the indices now, we can see headings that point the reader to Christian writings on heresies, dreams, magic, women, and Jews.

Migne rhapsodized over the indices, but he surely felt the same about his entire publishing enterprise: "What an economy of time! It's better than the railroad, and even the balloon, its electricity!" The Abbé would be happy to know that his work has come even closer to *l'électricité*; the *patrologies* are now available on CD-ROM. Migne had staked his salvation on his publishing. He wrote to a friend that he was prepared to go to Purgatory, "if, all things being equal, my *cours complets de Patrologie* does not cause me to go directly to heaven." Despite Bloch's overly hip and repetitious prose, we can easily imagine Migne ensconced in heaven amidst a crowd of lazier, cowering souls. No doubt, he is preparing to send down a prospectus that will grab new subscribers for the electronic version of his beloved books.

Defending the Defensible

IN DEFENSE OF ELITISM. *By William A. Henry, III. Doubleday. $20.*

Reviewed by CHRISTOPHER CLAUSEN

In 1990 the Democratic Leadership Council, chaired by William Jefferson Clinton, then governor of Arkansas, issued a declaration of principles that proclaimed: "We believe the promise of America is equal opportunity, not equal outcomes." William A. Henry, III, the Pulitzer Prize-winning culture critic for *Time* magazine who died earlier this year of a heart attack at the age of forty-four, agreed with this dictum but found it increasingly belied by most aspects of American life. The thesis of his posthumous book is that the whole of recent American culture, from television game shows to Ivy League universities, represents a battlefield on which individual achievement and the normal standards for judging it have been at war with a sentimental egalitarianism in which all qualitative distinctions among individuals, ethnic groups, intellectual achievements, and civilizations are denounced as forms of oppression.

In Henry's view the forces of egalitarianism have been winning hands down, with unfortunate results in nearly every area of life. Hence the fact that *elitism* has come to rival *racism* as a

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high-voltage thunderbolt for indiscriminate hurling at the enemy, whether one happens to be a congressman of either party in a tight campaign for re-election or a professor of English arguing for a new graduate seminar on comic books.

"The missing element in every phase of American life, from education to culture to the thicket of identity politics, is what used to be called rugged individualism," Henry forthrightly summarizes near the end of the book. "This sort of frontier self-reliance is utterly out of fashion." Elitism, he declares, is responsible for all important cultural achievements, for economic competitiveness (a persistent concern of the book), even for the rise of Bill Clinton. Equality of rights and opportunities should not be—but often is—confused with equal achievement. "To speak in defense of elitism," Henry adds, "is not to tilt the balance of national life, but to seek to restore it."

Thus baldly summarized, *In Defense of Elitism* may sound like another in a long, sometimes distinguished series of conservative attacks on the system of group entitlements whose basis is self-proclaimed victimhood. There are, however, two important differences to emphasize. First, Henry takes pains to describe himself as a Democrat and "a card-carrying member of the ACLU." (Your reviewer also happens to be both of those things.) The question of what constitutes a liberal nowadays is too complicated to resolve here, but Henry's book belongs to a growing list of attacks on multiculturalism and related phenomena by people who don't think of themselves as conservatives—books such as Robert Hughes's *Culture of Complaint*, David Bromwich's *Politics by Other Means*, Harold Bloom's *The Western Canon*, and Richard Bernstein's *Dictatorship of Virtue*.

The more important difference between this book and others of its genre is that it finds multiculturalism and political correctness to be not so much impositions by a left-wing intellectual elite as natural though highly destructive exaggerations of the traditional American belief in equality. The point is worth emphasizing because it implies that the struggle against affirmative-action preferences in the workplace, radical feminism in the news media, historical fantasies about American Indians in the public schools, or the sanctification of trash in art museums—all targets of the book—will be much harder to win than if

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none of these phenomena had deep roots in American psyches.

"Save perhaps in the statistics-dominated realms of sports and finance, where accomplishment remains readily quantifiable and seemingly ideologically neutral," Henry points out near the beginning, "American society has lost the confidence and common ground to believe in standards and hierarchies. We have taken the legal notion that all men are created equal to its illogical extreme, seeking not just equality of justice in the courts but equality of outcomes in almost every field of endeavor." For the most part he seems to underestimate the pessimistic conclusions to which his diagnosis leads. If, for example, the crazier versions of multiculturalism emanated from a few Paris-influenced academics, they might soon disappear in the normal cycles of fashion. If, on the other hand, they represent a late-twentieth-century interpretation, however misguided, of the Declaration of Independence, combating them becomes far more difficult.

"Scholarly multiculturalism," Henry points out astutely, "with its emphasis on cruelty and oppression in the past, is in effect the propaganda arm of affirmative action and other political quota plans." Alas, affirmative action itself is an entirely homegrown response to an array of social problems, drawing on the historical practices of big-city political machines and acquiesced in for a quarter of a century now by both major parties. The question of what political or other means people who think as Henry does might use effectively against the excesses of egalitarianism is hardly raised in the book. Henry was, after all, an individualist, and one gets the impression that stating his position and arguing for it were ends in themselves rather than means to bring about change.

This way of writing the book led to advantages and disadvantages. The disadvantages are sloppy organization; a sometimes belligerent carelessness in stating controversial points that will needlessly alienate some readers who might have agreed; and—maybe most important—repeated inconclusive discussions of the most explosive issue of all, the question of genetic racial inequalities. There was no need at all to raise it, and Henry has been doubly unfortunate that, after his book went to press, *The Bell Curve* by Charles Murray and the late Richard Herrnstein made it even more incendiary.

Perhaps not surprisingly, the merits of *In Defense of Elitism* are very similar to its defects. While most of the material it covers is familiar in a general way from earlier treatments, its author had a splendid ability to make lapidary statements that impress the reader both with their precision and with their author's evident sincerity. In Henry, you feel, the world lost a fearless liberal in the old-fashioned sense of the word. "I am fully aware," he states early in the book, "that much of what I deplore as retrograde tribalism or wrongheaded moralism is regarded by large sectors of the population as progress." That's as close to repentance as he ever comes. A few pages later, he says forthrightly, "Some ideas are better than others, some values more enduring, some works of art more universal."

Some of his comments about particular groups seem debatable or overstated; for example, "The difficulty with Hispanics is that they want to change the rules for upward mobility. They claim, by right of sheer numbers, the power to rise without accepting the shared national language." Many Hispanics claim no such thing, though there is a certain giddy pleasure in reading someone who can still generalize in this confident fashion about a large ethnic group. In describing his (quite reasonable) conception of a "superior culture," he states that such a culture promotes the medical care of its members and adds, "By medicine I mean Western medicine, pending persuasive nonanecdotal research into the merits of any other kind."

Concluding his discussion of multiculturalism, he makes a statement that would be hard to improve: "America has many races. It needs only one culture, the more inclusive the better." None of these ideas would get you fired in a university today, assuming you had tenure, but they certainly wouldn't help you get a job. One of Henry's less sensible judgments is that academic tenure should be abolished, an action that would mean the end of what little opposition to multiculturalism currently survives in higher education.

At least historically, liberals believe in individual liberty, a conviction that saturates *In Defense of Elitism*. Journalists, at least historically, believe in facts. One of Henry's most often repeated points is that, in areas of life from education to television quiz shows (maybe not such a long distance any more), contemporary

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egalitarianism—the validation of everyone's point of view or "story"—has substituted fantasy for fact. Afrocentrism in the public schools furnishes one kind of example. The prevailing style in TV game shows offers another. "There is only one *Jeopardy!*—only one show where there are identifiable right and wrong responses and where having paid attention in the classroom will actually do you some good. The vastly more common model is *Family Feud*, where the goal is to guess the answer (to always broad, sometimes vague, and mostly inane questions) given most often by other Americans in a poll. The point is not to be right or knowledgeable but simply to resemble the norm."

Here as in so many other ways, the equalization of everybody, instead of validating differences, has the opposite effect of making everyone the same. If truth is no defense, if objective fact has become a meaningless concept, what justification is there for thinking differently from your ignorant neighbors? Claiming to know the correct answer doesn't make you more right than anybody else, let alone smarter; it just makes you an elitist. Thomas Gray's lines "Where ignorance is bliss, 'tis folly to be wise" have always had a certain resonance in America, but never more so than today.

Making It New

RECOVERING AMERICAN LITERATURE. *By Peter Shaw. Ivan R. Dee. $22.*

Reviewed by JOHN P. SISK

Peter Shaw's new book is a lucid and impressive extension of his opening sentence: "The attitudes of American critics toward the Classic American novels of the nineteenth century underwent a transformation after the 1960s." This transformation, he claims, was the consequence of academic radicalism, and the urgency in his book derives from the conviction that the recovery of this literature is intimately connected with our effective existence in the contemporary world. As Shaw puts it in his chapter on *Huckleberry Finn*, since the 1950s our culture has suffered from "a positive admonition to make literature serve politics," the result being "a distinct loss of sophistication about how literature works."

In America or elsewhere one of the first signs of this loss is an atrophy of the reader's or critic's capacity to resist the all-too-human tendency to read literature in terms of his or her ideological commitments. So in the 1980s the voguish conviction in the academy that covert national imperialism was stifling freedom resulted in a slavery-centered reading of *Huckleberry Finn*. Such a reading, of course, was not only attractively up-to-date but attractively reductive and therefore a handy way to validate the bias one began with. In his chapter on *The Scarlet Letter*, Shaw sees these attractions at work in those feminist critics who "ask themselves whether Hawthorne is a protofeminist or a misogynist" and so affiliate themselves with all the other politically correct critics who are "unable to think in any but the unliterary language of either/or."

Shaw's point throughout is that this is the language we must live with when literature serves politics. In that conjunction we expect the unnuanced treatment of character we get in melodrama or propaganda. Politicizing critics are inclined to ask fan-magazine-level questions about the forthcoming marriage of Verena Tarrant and Basil Ransom in Henry James's *The Bostonians*, for instance, and thus miss the commonsense realism of the novel's perspective, which does not encourage an either/or prediction about the marriage.

On the other hand, politicizing critics are quite capable of sounding critically sophisticated as they attack what Shaw considers commonsense interpretations. Thus thanks to an ironic reversal, Melville's *Billy Budd* can be shown to endorse the bias against authority that since the mid-1960s has been pervasive in the academy. Meanwhile other critics have been able to interpret the literal cannibalism of the natives in Melville's *Typee* as an allegoric exposé of the much more pervasive cannibalism of the so-called civilized world. Shaw contends that this romance with the primitive runs counter to common sense and the findings of modern anthropology—a reversal, he says, in which "cultural relativism and celebra-

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tion of the primitive were adapted to the terms of contemporary politics."

But in American pastoral the bias against civilization (itself the product of a simplifying either/or) has always been able to thrive in a context of historical and anthropological misinformation. The same can be said about the pastoral expectations of sexual passion that divide the reader's or critic's feelings in *The Scarlet Letter*: "on the one hand plunging him into an antinomian spirit of revolt and on the other immersing him in the absolutes of Puritan condemnation." Here the politically incorrect and passion-frightened Puritans stand for the repressiveness of culture, and those contemporary critics who believe that Hester Prynne shares their radical sexual politics then have the problem of deciding whether her creator is himself politically correct.

"In the course of dismissing Hawthorne's art," Shaw writes, "the critics grow artless." In a confusion of realms, then, Hester gets treated as if she were a real person, not an artistic creation, so that it becomes easy for the critic to believe that he or she knows Hester better than Hawthorne does. With this certainty it is also easy to see Hester as the heroic dissenter she must be if the critic is not to waste his time with her. But in Shaw's view Hawthorne's Hester is a more complex and ultimately more human person, who gives expression to "a tragic sense of the fate that can lie in store for the dissenter."

Karl Marx, himself a poet to begin with and always a lover of Goethe and Shakespeare, has done as much as anyone to obscure the distinction between politicized and literary analysis. One result is that Melville's *Moby Dick* has been a happy hunting ground for those who, armed with the critical tools of Marxist anticapitalism, concentrate on those corruptions of American culture that have become the prize subjects of academic criticism since World War II. The consequence, Shaw observes, has been "widely accepted political readings, each of which has its modicum of truth" but all of which miss the fact that Melville was writing an epic: "a work that at once celebrates a culture and explores its deepest contradictions." Possessed as it is by the vision of what might and ought to be, such criticism is as likely to miss the dimension of epic as the dimension of tragedy. At the same time, it is fated to have those problems with what it conceives to be an arbitrarily fixed literary canon that Shaw has addressed in his Spring 1994 *Sewanee Review* article, "The Assault on the Canon."

Recovering American Literature is a well-written, thoroughly researched, and much needed book. But as its author surely knows, his opponents, having discovered how useful literature can be, will not go quietly or by rational argument. When Ezra Pound advised us to make it new, he had poets in mind, not academic critics, but in a postmodern world rich with theoretic possibilities none have taken the Poundian injunction more seriously than the critics. One can only hope that some of them will find a way to make it new, and even get tenure, by recovering what in the perversities of politicization has been lost.

An Oscar Performance

A TALENT FOR GENIUS: THE LIFE AND TIMES OF OSCAR LEVANT. *By Sam Kashner and Nancy Schoenberger. Villard. $25.*

Reviewed by JACOB A. STEIN

If you were unable to make it through to Proust's final volume of *Remembrance of Things Past*, I suggest you try the recent biography of Oscar Levant. There you will find an equivalent version of *Time Regained*. Levant, just as Proust, withdrew from society to his bedroom where his mind and body became the battlefield on which a dozen fatal diseases contended for victory. Levant was all but forgotten by his public. Most thought he had died. Then one day an invitation was delivered to his Beverly Hills bedroom inviting him to a snobbish social affair to be attended by the once-powerful elite of Hollywood society. Levant's own matinée chez la princesse de Guermantes was to be Carol Marcus Saroyan Matthau's house party in honor of Charlie Chaplin's 1972 grand return to Hollywood, after years in exile, to accept honors too long delayed. Carol Marcus was a girlhood friend of Chaplin's wife, Oona, who knew of Chaplin's friendship with Levant. Levant balances the

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card upright between bottles of pills on the bedside table. He cannot accept. He has confined himself to his bedroom for years. He examines the invitation again. He re-reads it. He reconsiders. After all, he will see, perhaps for the last time, the friends from the days when he was the star regular at exclusive Hollywood parties. He subdues his abulia. He will attend.

The party takes place on Sunday afternoon. Levant is shocked to see that his friend Charlie is a feeble old man seated on the flagstone terrace protected from the mild breezes by a topcoat over his shoulders, Italian style. Stars of yesteryear totter around on the stilts of age. Among the guests are Cary Grant, Greer Garson, Danny Kaye, Rosalind Russell, Henry Fonda, and Groucho Marx. Candice Bergen is the designated photographer. She discovers Oscar Levant sulking in the shadows, showing, as she would later say, "the face that launched a thousand analysts."

Levant extends a palsied hand to someone he thinks he recognizes. He is met with a questioning look—Could this haggard invalid be Oscar Levant? Yes it is. The once powerful are now displaced by those, who, only five years earlier, Levant would have ignored as climbers to be avoided.

Levant, unlike Proust, did not leave the party and write volumes describing the twisted chain of events that preceded the epiphany. In Levant's case those events, in considerable detail, make up his biography, a story of arrivals, meetings, misunderstandings, and departures.

Oscar Levant was born in Pittsburgh in 1906. His father, Max Levant, was a jeweler who wanted his son to study medicine. His mother, recognizing Oscar as a piano prodigy, wanted him to become a concert pianist. Although Levant dropped out of high school when he was fifteen, he, in his own way, satisfied the wishes of both parents. For a time he was the highest paid concert artist in America. He did study medicine, not in medical school but as a patient afflicted with hypochondria, drug addiction, and psychiatric malpractice on both the East and West Coasts.

Young Levant arrived in New York in 1922. His brother Harry was employed there as a conductor of Broadway musical pit bands. Through Harry, Oscar got theater jobs playing the piano. Within three years Oscar was play-

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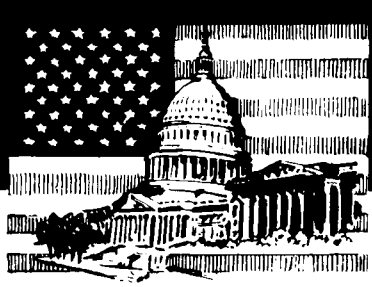

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ing the piano with popular dance bands and keeping company with chorus girls.

During these times George Gershwin was the rising star. The Gershwin name and his ragtime were everywhere. Levant was anxious to meet Gershwin. Levant describes the first meeting in his 1940s book, *A Smattering of Ignorance.*

To my astonishment I found Gershwin amazingly accessible at his apartment on 110th Street. When I arrived he was working on the first movement of "our" concerto with Bill Daly, his devoted friend and favorite conductor. I had scarcely accustomed myself to the reality of his presence when I realized that he was halfway through playing the new work.

I was bristling with inarticulateness and stammered some graceless remark.

George mistook my confusion and admiration for disapproval, which in turn made him voluntarily hostile. In addition to the work itself, his swift and mettlesome piano playing had so stimulated and excited me that the old dormant envy was reborn.

He was merely annoyed and returned to his work. I left, having successfully made my usual bad impression.

The Gershwin relationship proved decisive for Levant, although it was of no great consequence for Gershwin. George Gershwin had reached and sped past all that Levant aspired to. Levant could see how far his own talent would take him and how far Gershwin had exceeded it. Levant took comfort in this recognition. It freed him from the obligation to test to the fullest his own talent. He could comfort himself with what-difference-would-it-make. Gershwin had already done it.

After that first meeting Levant insinuated himself into the Gershwin circle. It included a brash group of New Yorkers who used knowledge as conversational vaudeville. It was as much a way of showing off as five-club juggling. It gave temporary identification to those otherwise born to die unknown.

These were people who carried an ideological enhancer, either Jungian or Marxist or Freudian. If an unfamiliar subject was introduced into the conversation, it was instantly given ideological protective coloration. As an illustration, if some recondite fact concerning Columbus's second voyage was mentioned, the unknown was dressed up with the known—the exploitation of native populations, Indian tribes, semiotics, Spanish conquistadors, and the dialectic of the strong dominating the weak. It was the cosmetic that made it impossible to separate the real from the spurious. Give a pianist who plays by ear a few notes of a popular song, and he improvises the rest with appropriate chords. A preliminary run-through and it is a Ferde Grofé arrangement. In its way, conversational vaudeville was knowledge played by ear. Levant, who did in fact play the piano by ear, caught on quickly.

One sees the archetype of the New York know-it-all in Levant's supporting roles in 1930s movies. He is the sidekick who never gets the girl. A piano appears and he effortlessly plays popular or light classical melodies. He also distributes wisecracks. Many were his own, the repeats of what he had said in conversation with friends within the Gershwin crowd when competing for cleverness.

A wisecrack is urban, cynical, and must be brief. The boys have no time to listen to a long story. Damon Runyon's annotation of a line from Ecclesiastes 9:11 is a good example: The race is not to the swift nor the battle to the strong, but that is the way to bet them. Levant's wisecracks never outshone the Runyon re-write, but a few are worth repeating. He said of Doris Day that he had met her before she was a virgin. When introduced to Greta Garbo, Levant replied, I didn't catch the name. In time Levant's reputation as a wit conferred an extrinsic weight to his conversation. He was picked up by the New York gossip columnists in need of celebrity smart talk.

The 1930s radio program *Information Please* gave Levant a frame for his conversational talents. He put his wit on display with a panel of show-offs who answered questions read by the intellectually elegant host, Clifton Fadiman. Levant's connection with *Information Please* demonstrates Levant's erratic pattern as a songwriter, a radio personality, a stage and film actor, a television host, and a writer. He was late for show time. His petulance was unpredictable. He was misunderstood. He was unreliable. His success carried with it self-doubt.

As good as he was, he was never good enough. He was merely talented. Others were the geniuses. Celebrity did not assuage his deep doubt. It converted it to guilt. Levant became the subject of a number of magazine profiles in which he was described as an eccentric genius. Here is a contemporary descrip-

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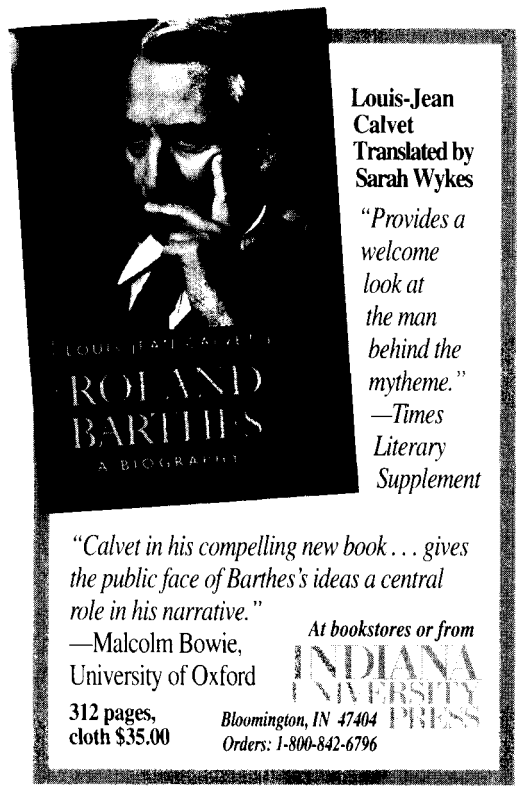
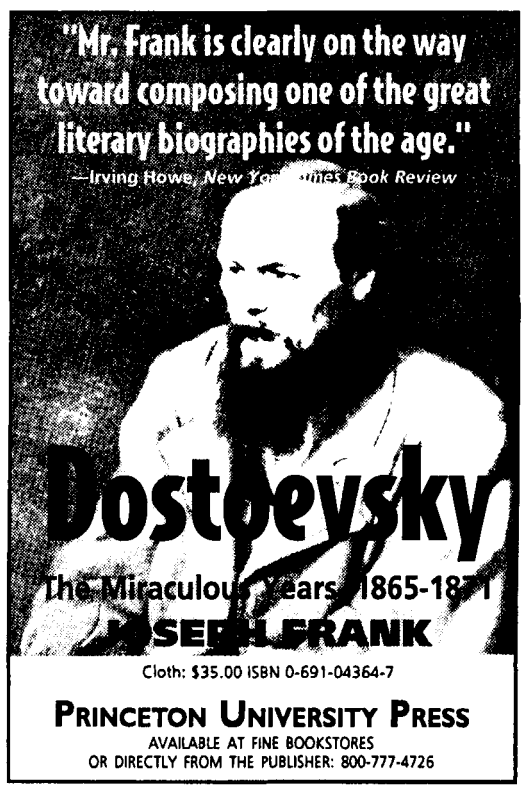
tion of him, typical of the others, by the Broadway columnist Louis Sobol.

For years, Levant cut his sardonic trail through Lindy's, Shor's, Reuben's and other gathering places in Manhattan until he drifted off to Hollywood and mingled with fellowmen at Chasen's and Romanoff's, then chief spawning grounds for savage wits. He convinced one and all in movieland, as he had us in New York, that his was not a gentle humor. He preferred the acid-dipped dirks of wit. As a result, Hollywood saw to it that in casting him for picture roles it would be for portrayals adhering to his reputation as a dour, caustic citizen. In fact, Levant often came to the aid of the scriptwriters by contributing his own dialog.

He attracted so much attention that he could not stand the pressure of his concert performances. When word circulated among the concert managers that Levant was unreliable, the work thinned out. Despite his unreliability, there were those who knew that his name on the boards attracted an audience. One of these was Howard Mitchell, the conductor of the National Symphony Orchestra. Mitchell and Levant were alike in that they both ran against the grain. They enjoyed singing "no" when the chorus was singing "yes." They both had a good eye for detecting and boldly exposing the fraudulent. Mitchell invited Levant to Washington to play with the National Symphony at a time when Levant's concert career had hit bottom. When he appeared for his rehearsal at Constitution Hall, he was unable to play. Howard Mitchell tried to reassure Levant but to no avail. Levant canceled the concert and fled. Nevertheless Howard Mitchell remained Levant's good friend. In June 1955 he invited him again to appear at Constitution Hall. Levant's name filled the concert hall, and this time he performed Gershwin's Concerto in F to great applause. His recovery as a concert pianist was short-lived. Self-doubt prevailed.

When there were no more concert bookings, Levant was pleased to learn that his reputation as a demolisher of reputations made him just the celebrity the television talk shows were busy using up. He was discovered and rediscovered. The last discoverer was Jack Paar, who presided over the final auctioning off of Levant's contrarian wit. Levant was obviously ill. He was blunt concerning his addic-





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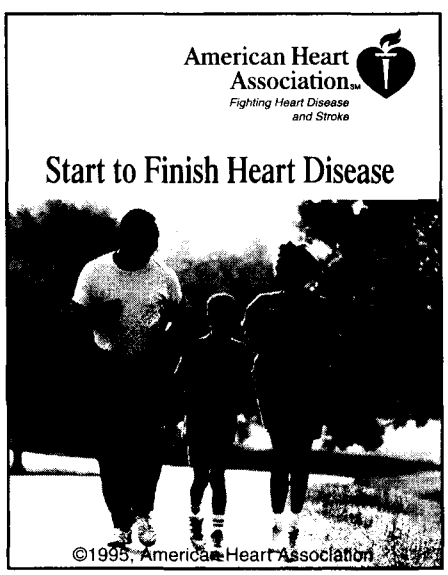
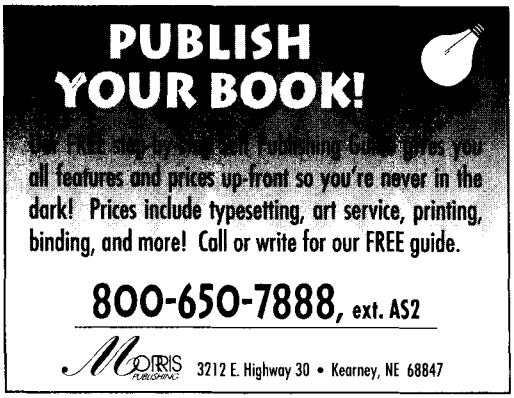
tions and other privacies. He was the first in with the TV auto-da-fé. He had superb qualifications. He was the youth who had stepped forward with the millstone of promise around his neck only to finish up as the self-confessed failure.

The Kashner-Schoenberger biography shows how much and how little there was to Levant. The accumulation of detail tells all one could wish to know of the life and times. In some respects the biography of a minor figure such as Levant would be more interesting if it were shorter and perhaps narrowly focused as a study of talented failure. The accumulation of detail distracts one from the decisive symptoms that provide the working diagnosis.

The book includes an appendix listing the fourteen movies in which Levant appeared, his many recordings of popular music, the popular music he wrote, the books he wrote, the music he composed, and his classical recordings. It is a phenomenal body of work. If one were asked to construct Levant's biography using only this evidence, Levant would come through as a highly disciplined person who efficiently used his time developing an impressive array of diverse talents. How wrong this would be. It is this what-might-have-been that explains in part Levant's personal tragedy.

The index of the biography has entries for just about every theatrical celebrity from the 1920s through the 1960s. Most are now too remote even for inclusion in the *New York Times* crossword puzzles. Such stuff as dreams are made of.





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The Reader Replies

How Not to Make a Stradivarius

In his article "How Not to Make a Stradivarius" in the Summer 1994 AMERICAN SCHOLAR, Thomas Levenson's argument that so-called chaos theory accounts for the failure of past endeavors to re-create the sound of a Stradivarius is compelling. However, Mr. Levenson may have overlooked the most fundamental of *initial conditions* which contributed to the uniqueness of Stradivari's instruments, namely, Stradivari himself and the community of instrument makers in which he carried on his trade.

Stradivari was extraordinarily gifted. His genius was not only that of a craftsman but that of a musician and mathematician as well. Yet Stradivari alone, as an *initial condition*, would have proved insufficient but for the fact that he happened to be in the right place at the right time. As Mr. Levenson noted, the community of instrument makers in Cremona, including its most prominent member, Amati, recognized Stradivari's multifaceted genius at an early age and facilitated the realization of that genius to the fullest extent. This community must also be recognized as an *initial condition.*

It is well recognized that the Cremona community had an oral tradition of instrument making. In this regard, it is often said that certain of the instruments made by Amati and Guarneri, who respectively preceded and followed Stradivari, are of comparable quality to those made by Stradivari.

The importance of this tradition to the success of Stradivari (and its regrettable absence at the time of Sacconi) is the essence of Andrew Dipper's comment about Sacconi cited by Mr. Levenson on page 369 of his article.

The central principle of chaos theory is that of *sensitive dependence on initial conditions.* This principle demystifies the ostensibly random nature to certain phenomena and in so doing it helps to explain why accurate prediction and exact re-creation of nonlinear systems is ultimately impossible. The principle of *sensitive dependence* would therefore appear to rule out the possibility of re-creating the sound of a Stradivarius unless Stradivari himself as well as his community and tradition were capable of re-creation.

VICTOR LIKWORNIK
CLIFFORD COLE
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

I have read "How Not to Make a Stradivarius" with a great deal of interest because I am one of the technical group around Carleen Hutchins that has been trying to use scientific methods to rationalize as much as we can the process of making a violin. Thomas Levenson has done an excellent job of condensing a very complicated story into understandable elements.

I would like to point out that test equipment now available to the technically minded provide some additional information to guide us in trying to solve the ancient puzzle of violin excellence.

The article touches on the fact that the Stradivarius violins have more overtones at quite high frequencies in the same range as the singer's formant. All of us technical types know that it is impractical directly to tune the response of the instrument in that frequency range. This can only be done by very delicate thickness changes at particular spots known to be sensitive in that frequency range. And the adjustments can only be done on finished instruments when the effects of changes can immediately be detected in the sound of the instrument.

Mr. Levenson mentions that Sacconi had deduced that Stradivarius put in the purfling after the plates and ribs had been assembled. This meant that he had to finish the edge thicknesses at the same time. We now know from our computer analyses of the vibrations of the assembled instruments that the most sensitive locations to scrape to change the nature of the high frequency overtones are near the edges of the plates close to the six blocks and near the tops of the F holes. It is plausible that his ear was

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sensitive enough and that his experimental techniques were good enough so that he learned just where to scrape to liberate the instruments to vibrate easily at those relatively high overtones. Only within the last four or five years have personal computers and their software become able to present relatively quickly to a technically minded maker a display of just what has happened to the tone and all the overtones of a violin when he has done some delicate scraping of the type described above.

As far as I have read, I have found no maker who has finished the edges and purfling of a violin after assembly since the time of Stradivarius. It is such an awkward physical process compared to doing it to the plates when separate and when they have good secure flat surfaces around the edge that no practical craftsman would consider doing it unless he knew that in doing so he was also making some final adjustments that were impossible to do in any other way.

Stay tuned. In a few years enough technically minded makers will have tried this additional approach to the final adjustment process to tell whether it is a useful tool or not.

OLIVER E. RODGERS
Kennett Square, Pennsylvania

Contrary to Thomas Levenson's belief in "How Not to Make a Stradivarius," Isaac Newton rarely, if ever, concerned himself with explicit questions of linearity or nonlinearity. But if he had been concerned about the linearity of musical instruments, he most certainly would not have made the egregious error of categorizing either the instruments themselves or the bits of wood and metal of which they are made as "nonlinear."

Mr. Levenson is very incorrect when he asserts that musical instruments are nonlinear: the notes of all musical instruments are solutions to linear differential equations that describe their operation. The mathematical principle of linearity states that the sum of two solutions of any linear differential equation is also a solution. The interpretation of this rule is that when two notes are sounded, their sum exists and can be perceived. In other words, when two notes are played, we can hear them both. This obviously natural situation would not obtain if the instruments were nonlinear, as Mr. Levenson believes. (Note that the curvaceous shape of a cello, while it may affect the relative loudness of the overtones of individual notes, has nothing at all to do with the question of linearity as raised by Levenson.)

If musical instruments were not linear, their resulting sounds would modulate one another, for instance the overtones of a violin note would multiply their amplitudes with one another, thereby producing all notes whose frequencies would be the sums of differences of each possible pairing of the overtones and the fundamental. Thus if there were five audible overtones plus the fundamental, we would have as many sums and differences as there are combinations of six objects taken two at a time. The result would be 15 sum notes plus 15 difference notes: noise. Each note played would therefore be accompanied, not by several harmonious overtones, but by a collection of strident sounds; we would hear noise. Musical instruments, if they were nonlinear, would squawk like barnyard animals; none would sing like canaries. Linearity also assures us that our ears can hear two notes played, as two notes, not as a cacophony of hundreds.

Again contrary to what Mr. Levenson seems to believe, Newton's Laws of Motion apply to all musical instruments, to each and every last one of them. Newton's laws applied to Mr. Levenson's fingers while he was writing about Stradivari. More generally, Newton's laws apply to almost everything we can see, hear, or touch: to every phenomenon that we are able to perceive with our unaided senses. Other physical laws, such as those of electricity and magnetism, of quantum mechanics, or of thermodynamics may additionally apply to the same phenomenon; in some cases, mostly having to do with astronomical observations, or with the design of high energy particle accelerators, Einstein's theory of relativity may be more appropriate than Newton's laws.

Nor did Newton use the concept of energy in his description of nature, as Levenson implies. That idea was invented long after his time, in the nineteenth century, when it became necessary to quantify whatever it was that steam engines took out of a fire, and put into rotating wheels. But had he known about the energy of motion, Newton would *not* have thought that "twice as much energy produces twice the velocity" (p. 373); Newton would have known, as most elementary science students eventually learn, that it requires four times as much energy to go twice as fast: kinetic energy is proportional to the square of the velocity: if you would make an object move two or three times as fast, you must give it four or nine times as much energy.

A contemporary idea is the concept of determinative chaos; as Mr. Levenson seems to suggest, it is not quite the same concept as the chaos out of which some religions teach us that God created the universe. Chaos has nothing to do with musical instruments, and Mr. Leven-

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son's remarks about the sensitivity to initial conditions of many nonlinear systems are entirely irrelevant to the question of why a cello sounds louder than would its unadorned vibrating strings. The engineering concept of "impedance matching" correctly explains this effect.

GEORGE E. VALLEY, JR.
Professor of Physics Emeritus
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

As a musicologist, cellist, and biographer of Carleen Maley Hutchins (*Ars Musica Denver*, 6/1, Fall 1993), I must respond to Thomas Levenson's Summer 1994 article. Levenson cites Hutchins and her associates to prove the equivalent of a Stradivarius, or a "perfect instrument," cannot be derived "from the laws of physics . . . ," a process Hutchins has not attempted. Hutchins measures violin components to determine their effect on an instrument's tone, a goal broader than Levenson describes. Levenson mentions her work in plate-tuning, a technique Hutchins has taught to hundreds of luthiers, but primarily considers the violin octet. This is a misrepresentation. Frederick A. Saunders (1875–1963), one of America's experts on violin acoustics, did not wish to scientifically describe a Stradivarius. He studied the violin's acoustics. Saunders was joined by Hutchins and others in the early 1950s, and Hutchins is now the foremost figure in the field of violin acoustics and a luthier who has built almost 400 string instruments of all sizes. The violin octet, in which construction ratios and standards of the violin are matched in eight different ranges, was requested by composer Henry Brant. The violin octet was never the sole goal of Hutchins or her colleagues, seen in the many articles in the *Journal of the Catgut Acoustical Society*. Levenson's description of the octet instruments as "monochromatic and dull," to a musician who has played the instruments, is without foundation. They have striking power and produce soft tones of great warmth. The instruments are not Strads, but were never meant to be. Continuing international interest in the octet is seen in their current visit to St. Petersburg Conservatory in Russia.

Allow me, too, to mention two further errata: The cello's lowest string is an octave and a fifth below the violin's, not an octave and a fourth (p. 354). In Amsterdam, Yo Yo Ma played the *Concerto for Viola* by Béla Bartók, not by Benjamin Britten (p. 364).

PAUL R. LAIRD
School of Fine Arts
University of Kansas

THOMAS LEVENSON replies

I am grateful to Dr. Valley for his letter, for it gives me the chance to sharpen the point I was trying to draw in my original piece. First, I must correct a couple of elementary errors. Dr. Valley correctly notes that kinetic energy and velocity are linked in a square relationship, not a linear one. A proper definition of a linear relationship in acoustics is one in which, according to Fletcher and Rossing's *The Physics of Musical Instruments*, the "output obtained from two inputs applies simultaneously is just the sum of the outputs that would be obtained if they were applied separately." The Scarlet Pimpernel principle was in effect: one will always fail to notice the most obvious mistakes, for the mind denies the possibility of the truly egregious error that the eyes can clearly see. My thanks to Dr. Valley for pointing it out, and to Dr. Laird for his two corrections of mistakes sadly made on the same principle. I add one more of my own: Peter and Wendy Moes both shape the archings of their instruments, not Peter alone, as I stated in the piece.

However, in the main thrust of his letter, Dr. Valley fundamentally misreads what the piece was about, and thus his comments, while accurate, are off the point. And in some cases he simply reads into the text claims that are not there.

Dr. Valley and I do agree that the properties of nonlinear systems have nothing to do with why a cello sounds louder than a simple vibrating string. But that wasn't the question being asked. Instead, I sought to explore what makes great stringed instruments distinctive—and specifically, why has it proved impossible to reproduce the qualities of the cellos and other instruments built by Antonio Stradivari? That is: "Why is one cello different from another?"—and not "why is a cello different from a non-cello?"

Dr. Valley employs one red herring. Contrary to his assertion, I wrote, explicitly, that "all of Newton's laws [of motion] still govern the system." That's the point—cello behavior displays striking individuality *despite* the fact that cellos are mechanical systems that obey the physical laws Newton first elaborated. Why?

The answer is that Newton's laws allow you to calculate fully the behavior of a system only when the system is relatively simple. As I wrote, one of the most ubiquitous sources of unpredictability in nature is the phenomenon of nonlinearity. The differential equations that physicists use in Newtonian mechanics to describe the motion of objects above the quantum scale can take either linear or nonlinear form, and the divergence from linearity can be small or great.

Dr. Valley's account of the behavior of linear acoustical systems is entirely accurate. However,

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he is incorrect when he asserts that all musical instruments must be linear systems. As one physicist *cum* instrument tuner put it to me, in orchestral instruments noise is a feature, not a bug—which is why no one has ever composed a symphony for unaccompanied tuning forks. More specifically, musical instruments display the consequences of nonlinear dynamics at some point in the range of their behavior, some more than others. Dr. Ralph Abraham, one of the deans of nonlinear dynamics, has reported to me about findings that some musical instruments, the clarinet, for example, even experience true chaotic behavior, complete with the bifurcations that are one of the canonical signs of the presence of chaos in a simple deterministic system.

In point of fact, however, most musical instruments, the cello included, do behave essentially as linear filters, transducing the initial signal (the stroke of a bow across the string) into a musical note. Treating the cello (or whatever) as a purely linear system allows physicists to do as they normally do, abstracting and simplifying actual physical situations to render problems of calculation easier to handle. But in the real world instruments are only *approximately* linear—and into the gap between approximate and absolute comes much of what is pleasing and distinctive in musical sound. As Neville Fletcher and Thomas Rossing write in their standard text, "More complex, more interesting and inherently more nonlinear is the situation encountered in steady-tone instruments, such as bowed strings or windblown pipes."

All this is to say that Dr. Valley's core comment is almost, but not quite right. But more importantly, Dr. Valley's concern is not on point. Remember: the mystery to be solved is why it is so hard to duplicate Stradivari. Chaos is one of the consequences of non-linearity in simple systems—and was invoked to show that problems of predictability are ubiquitous in nature, even at the simplest level (including, potentially, that of the individual components that make up a cello). Put all those components together, and it is chaos's sister phenomenon, complexity, that becomes the predominant factor driving the unpredictability of cellos. In the parts that make up a cello there are lots of parameters—perhaps millions, whose precise settings can shape the sound. Many of those parameters are determined by complicated interactions of coupled oscillators, some essentially linear, some not. They cannot be measured with sufficient precision to be duplicated exactly—and hence Stradivari remains unique.

To put all this another way: if the components that compose a cello behaved in truly linear fashion, then it should be easy enough to duplicate any given sound, however laborious the calculations might be in practice. In fact, the end result does behave predictably: a Stradivari sounds like a Stradivari. But the process that leads to that final outcome is not conformable to expectation in the same way; non-linearity great and small, simple systems and complex, interact to confound the effort to duplicate the remarkable phenomenon that is a great musical instrument.

Dr. Valley's other comments are more minor. It is enough to say that the article I wrote and the one he read seem to be rather different. Nowhere do I suggest, for example, that Newton himself was much concerned with linearity or its absence, nor that Newton had anything to do with the concept of energy. On a broader level, though, I sympathize with what I take to be Dr. Valley's overarching sentiment. Words like *nonlinearity* and *chaos* are useful when discussing one very important idea: that nature is not nearly so conformable to our expectations as we once thought it was. But such terms have been worn smooth with overuse in contexts far removed from their original realms. The key point is to remember that building cellos remains a craft and an art, however much informed by scientific inquiry—and that same can be said of the pursuit of science itself.

As for Dr. Laird: Dr. Laird fundamentally misreads my piece and as a consequence, defends what was not attacked. Carleen Hutchins's work with Frederick Sanders and others was pathbreaking. As I clearly stated, it yielded fundamental insights into violin family acoustics. The issue in my piece was not whether or not that work produced Strads—but whether such applied acoustical physics could ever do so. My conclusion was that it could not. As to my characterization of the octet's sound—I am hardly alone in my sense that the gain in power enjoyed by that family has come at a loss in color, especially as compared to old-master instruments, and I see no reason to change that aesthetic judgment.

Finally, I entirely agree with Dr. Likwornick, Mr. Cole, and with Oliver Rodgers.

ERRATUM

I wish to cite a factual error in my review of Dostoevsky's *A Writer's Diary* in the Winter 1995 AMERICAN SCHOLAR. When I quote Alexander Herzen on Dostoevsky, I incorrectly identify the quotation as Herzen's response to Dostoevsky's Pushkin speech of 1880. Please accept my apologies.

ALAN RUTENBERG

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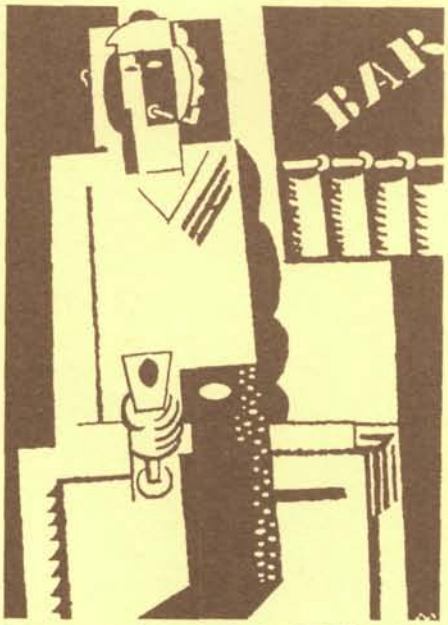

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